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THE
WORKS

OF

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

VOLUME II.

CONTAINING

IZRAM, A MEXICAN TALE,
HELEN FLEETWOOD,
PASSING THOUGHTS,
THE FLOWER GARDEN; OR, GLIMPSES
OF THE PAST,

POEMS, ON THE PENINSULA WAR,
PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS IN
HEAVENLY PLACES,
SECOND CAUSES; OR, UP AND BE
DOING.

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IZRAM, A MEXICAN TALE.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE FOLLOWING STORY MAY BE SUPPOSED TO HAVE
OCCURRED A CONSIDERABLE TIME PREVIOUS TO THE GREAT STRUGGLE
FOR INDEPENDENCE IN SOUTH AMERICA.

TO
HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT,

WHOSE HIGH RANK AND EXALTED STATION

TEND MORE CONSPICUOUSLY TO DISPLAY

THOSE ENDOWMENTS OF CHRISTIAN HUMILITY,

AND

THAT ABUNDANT FRUIT OF GOOD WORKS,

WHICH,

SPRINGING FROM FAITH,

BY THEIR EXAMPLE WIN TO OBEDIENCE,

THIS VOLUME

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HER GRACE'S

VERY GRATEFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

IZRAM,

A MEXICAN TALE.



CANTO I.

"YE verdant shades, that gently bow
Your welcome o'er this throbbing brow,
And soft beneath my burning tread
In flowery moss a carpet spread,
Joyous I hail sweet nature's throne,
Untainted by the breath of men;
These echoes know no mortal tone,
No step unhallowed prints the glen;
All silent, save the feathery throat,
Warbling its wild untutored note,
The rustling leaf, and fluttering wing,
And murmurs of this cooling spring,
Whose silver tides their freshness roll,
Like mercy to a parching soul."
So spake the pilgrim youth, who strayed
To where those limpid waters played;
Laid his light musquet on the bank,
Bowed with uncovered head, and drank.

Ere from the stream his lip can part,
A savage growl, resounding nigh,
Thrills through the traveller's beating heart;
Starting he views the blood-shot eye:
The jaguar in his wrath is there,
The red ball rolls its fiery glare,
But threats not him:—beneath the shade
The victim in repose is laid;
Native his garb,—while zephyr sighed
O'er his young cheek, and fanned his rest,
Waving the ringlet's glossy pride,
And sporting with the lightsome vest,
Death from his ambush marked the prey;
A moment—and he wakes no more:
The murderer bares, in dread array,
Those grinding fangs to quaff his gore;
Type of the lurking foes, who scan
The heedless hour of dreaming man!
But help is nigh—with purpose true,
Swift to its aim, a death-shot flew;
The howling monster plunges the wood,
And tracks it with a stream of blood.

Upstarts the sleeper, lightnings flash
Beneath the long and sable lash:
"Iberian blood-hound! darest thou creep,
Thou soul of crime, on sacred sleep?"
The glittering dirk is brandished high,
But all unmoved the pilgrim stands:
"No blood-hound, no Iberian I,—
My breath was drawn from fairer lands,
Where treachery lurks not: lo, the deed
That succoured thee at utmost need,
Yet moves thine ire." The fact was plain,
The branches rent, the crimson stain,
Dying the spot where couched the foe,
And roots upturn, their comment show.

A rapid glance that scene surveys,
Then meets the traveller's steadfast gaze.
"Too scant the grace to bid thee live,
Stranger, I did the wrong—forgive:
Well hast thou 'scaped my knife; the meed
Is to thy birth, and not thy deed.
I ween this bold exploit was shown
Less for my safety than thine own.
Yet what thy nation? quickly tell;
This alien tongue of pompous Spain,
Detested accent! suits thee well;
Beware thou dally not—'twere vain."
"Thy speech is rude; I answer not
From cold compulsive fear; I know
The galling chain, the bitter lot,
That bids thy country writhe in woe:
Britons can bend in pitying love,
Where threats nor daunt, nor perils move."

"And art thou of that island race?
Methinks their lineaments I trace;
Thy bearing lacks the fiendish pride
Of arrogance with craft allied:
I like thee well—thou shalt with me;—
Yet ere we wend in peace along,
Endure one test in courtesy,
—Suspicion is the child of wrong—
Somewhat of English speech I know."
The youth complies with willing smile,

Freely the dear-loved accents flow
That echo through his sea-girt isle.

"Then thus I sheath my trusty blade,
And plight a hand that ne'er betrayed,
Though rightful meed, with biting steel,
It erst hath dealt, and yet shall deal.
Izram, whose soul the dart hath torn,
Yet hurls it back with double scorn ;
Izram the wronged, who ever yet
With full arrear hath paid the debt
Of human hate, nor shrinking swerved
From vengeful deed—by thee preserved,
A grateful guerdon shall not fail,
If hand or counsel aught avail."

"I take thy proffer, freely made ;
Conduct me to thy dwelling's shade ;
Fain would I rest till morning's ray,
For I have trod a toilsome way :
Entangled here, thy better skill
May guide me to the distant hill,
The eastern mount, whose borders sweep
Even to the rude and briny deep."

The Briton meets with placid heed
The piercing glance that fain would read
His inmost thought. "The choice is new
To wind this dreary forest through,
When broad, beyond its utmost bound,
Lies many a league of beaten ground.
What lured thee from th' accustomed road,
To pierce the serpent's dark abode ?
Methinks it were for reason good,
If man prefer this wildering wood."

"I marvel not such pathway sought
Should waken a mistrustful thought ;
But while at ease our frames are laid
Beneath this aloe's beauteous shade,
Hear thou my story, sad and brief :—
Thou know'st the creed of erring Spain,
Whose votaries clasp in blind belief
The dreams of a distempered brain,
And deem the corn that crowns the sod
Transmuted to the living God.

"In our fair isle the Lord hath given,
Unerring guide ! the light from heaven ;
It gleams from forth the written page,
On clown and noble, youth and age :
Taught by the rule of truth, we turn
From fabling tales, the idol spurn,
And, holding fast th' eternal word,
Confess no Saviour but the Lord.

"Twin brothers, linked in two-fold band,
Peaceful we sought this fatal strand,
Nor dreamt such murderous hate could shame
The beauty of the Christian name.

Soon were we marked, through every scene
Our steps were traced, the watch was set,
But still in act and purpose clean,
We tramped on the viewless net.

"At length, on some high festal day,
Heedless we urged our wonted way :
The host was there, the blinded crowd
Before their senseless idol bowed,
And bent the knee, and drooped the head,
In homage to a god of bread.
Erect amid the prostrate throng,
We bore us, as it passed along ;
With deafening shouts the clamour rose,
And fiercely pressed our bigot foes ;
We could not kneel : the Lord hath spoke,
And cursed is each idol yoke.

"One, deep in crime as high in place,
Blot of his office and his race,
With frantic rage his poinard drew,
And aimed it with a thrust so true,
That ere I heaved a second breath,
My brother's eyes were dark in death."

"Remorseless fiend ! accursed blow !"
"The Christian doth not curse a foe ;
No, not such foe as he, who stood
Red in young Ulric's streaming blood,
Nor sated with one harmless life,
Upraised o'er me the murderous knife
But Heaven was pleased to spare—I fled,
Turned hitherward my dubious tread,
And sure had passed thy slumbers by,
But for the jaguar's threatening eye,
That marked thee for his prey. I crave
Thy guidance toward the eastern wave,
Where haply floats, beside the strand,
Some banner of my native land."

"Izram hath sworn, and he will bide
In truth and fealty by thy side.
But say, for well my soul doth ken
The brood of yon Iberian den,
What name bears he, the hound of death,
Who checked thy brother's vital breath ?"
"Alvarez Gondolph, high in rank,"—
Upstarting from the mossy bank,
With arm extended Izram stood,
Like the roused monarch of the wood :
His eye-halls shot with crimson fire,
Each reddening feature flashed with ire,
While joy's triumphant wildness shone
In the stern glance, and swelled the tone.

"Now hear, thou blazing god of day,
Unflinching in thy destined way,
Who rollest on thy fiery path,
Blasting the rebel climes in wrath,



Frowning to wither, blight, destroy,
 Or beaming light, and life, and joy ;
 And hear ye clouds, that, hurrying past,
 Waft spirits wild on storm and blast ;
 Ye demons, who delight to dwell
 In the dark wave's tumultuous swell,
 Or, wrapped in subterranean fire,
 Work your fierce will in quenchless ire ;
 Hear, and attest, in murmurs deep,
 The vow of vengeance ne'er to sleep :
 Proclaim in thunder, seal in blood,
 The tie ofvengeful brotherhood !"

Once more beneath the branches flung,
 The traveller's shrinking hand he wrung :
 " I deemed not mortal man should dare

In wrongs so deep, so dark, as mine,
 In luxury so rich, to share ;

But, Briton, lo the cup is thine,
 The draught of sweet revenge to drain,
 Till not one lingering drop remain.
 I've spread a wplier snare to-day,

Than e'er enclosed the beast of prey :
 Before another sun be set,

Thou'lt view the quarry in the net.
 I thought not to endure thy feet
 Within my deep unseen retreat ;

But we are brothers, I have said,

And waked the hope I will not mock ;
 Thy kindred blood on Gondolph's blade
 Shall be thy pass through flood and rock ;
 And from that rock thine arm may sweep
 His mangled carcase to the deep."

" Now shame upon thee, man of death !

I told thee that I cursed him not ;
 And shall I dye my Christian faith
 With crimson taint, satanic blot ?
 Far as the space from pole to pole
 Be murderous thought from Albert's soul !
 Nor shall such deed thy dwelling stain,
 O Mexican, nor foul thy hand,
 Till prayer, and faith, and zeal be vain,
 To pluck away one burning brand."

" I like thy heat ; in this I view,
 Fool though thou be, thy tale is true ;
 If false, thou hadst not crossed me yet :
 But, true or false, my steel is whet.
 There's candour on thy quiet brow,
 I neither doubt nor fear thee now.
 Proceed, a sheltering roof is nigh,
 And while my cares thy need supply,
 My lip shall link that blood-hound's name
 With the full record of his shame."

Then rising, with elastic tread,
 Through many a winding path he led,
 Free as the gamesome steed, whose mane
 Ne'er drooped beneath controuling rein ;

And Albert, in the step of pride,
 The form of lightness, mein of grace,
 Might almost deem his youthful guide
 A sylvan shape of fabled race.

Some twenty summer suns had shed
 Their ripening fires on Izram's head ;
 His hue confessed the tawny glow,

Born of a fierce and fervid ray,
 But pale and clear the polished brow,

Where ebon locks disordered stray :
 And ever as impatiently

Aside their silken veil was thrown,
 Beneath its curve the glancing eye,
 Like lightning from the midnight sky,

In awful beauty shone.
 Something there was that mutely told,

No vulgar stamp was graven here ;
 An impress cast in finer mould,

And nurtured in a gentler sphere,
 Than might be seem those captive plains,
 Crushed in Iberia's pond'rous chains.

Narrow and low the hut arose,
 A summer bower for short repose,
 Yet fenced around with thorn and stake,
 From prowling foes that haunt the brake.

Roofed with the broad palmetto leaf,
 That fan-like o'er the rafters spread,

And crested as a warrior chief,
 Beneath its light and plummy head.

Amid the flower-wove lattice play
 The quivering shade and stealing ray ;
 Floating on zephyr's liquid sigh,

A thousand dazzling forms are nigh,
 That in the brilliant blaze unfold

Their gossamer besprent with gold.
 There hums the insect bird, who gleams

Glorious as day's departing beams ;
 Beneath the proud papilio pressed,

The blossom bends its burdened crest ;
 He steps the flower, a conscious king,

Or fans the bud with gorgeous wing ;
 And not a breeze can hover nigh,

But teems with blended harmony ;
 As every leaf were vocal grown,

And breathed a descant all its own,
 While bowed the palm with princely head,

And wide a guardian shadow spread.

A simple couch of fragrant leaves,
 In purple cased, each guest receives ;

And Izram from his secret hoard,
 Profusely heaps the bending board

With all the tempting fruits that lie
 Mellowing beneath a genial sky ;

And while their tints commingling glowed,
 A juice nectareous sparkling flowed,

In shells of cocoa, richly bound
 With hoops of burnished gold around.

With winning grace, in courtly guise,
The Mexican his comrade plies ;
Selecting oft, with studious care,
The choicest of their woodland fare ;
With mirthful thought, and sportive smile,
Cheering their sweet repast the while.

" Inhale this cooling draught again ;
Methinks those whiskered Dons would drain
The luscious stream with bolder swell ;
And if the goblet 'scaped, 'twere well."
" Too tempting shines the glittering ore :
What if their ken the scene explore ?"
Dark radiance flashed from Izram's eye,
Lightly he touched his dagger's hilt,
And smiled ; perchance, in deeper dye,
The rash intruder's hide were gilt,
Ere his profaning touch should tear
The meanest flower that blushes there."

" How freely in the mortal strife
Thy hand can sport with human life !
I would not ape thy deadly skill,
Purveyor to the yawning tomb ;
Nor hurl a spirit, reeking still
With crime, to its eternal doom."

" And yet, were wildest peril near,
No flincher thou : I've watched thine eye,
And not a mist of earthly fear
Hath clouded that calm azure sky.
By thy bold deed preserved, I long
To call thee friend : our years the same,
If right I guess ; in danger, wrong,
United ; branded both with shame ;
Thou for thy Christian faith, and I
For unsold truth and loyalty."

Gone was the hour of lightsome glee,
His brow grew stern with bitter thought,
That like a sullen wintry sea
In mystery and darkness wrought.
Still, as to quell the rising pain,
His lips the sparkling goblet drain ;
His glance emits the gloomy fire
Of restless care and feverish ire.

Albert beheld, his gen'rous heart
In secret wept the exile's smart ;
He shuddered o'er a soul so young,
By murderous hate to vengeance stung.
And yearned upon his thorny way
To pour the beam of gospel-day.
But Izram, on his couch reclined,
With graceful gesture half arose :
His waving locks are flung behind,
His cheek with proud emotion glows,
In measured phrase the accents ran,
And thus the tale of wrong began.

" Know'st thou Chiapa's soil, where rise
Wrecks of a glorious edifice ?
Offspring of kingly sires, who shone
On Mexico's unconquered throne,
Or, ranged upon her island shore,
Purpled the lake with princely gore.
Uprooted from their beauteous land,
Once more engrafted, and taught to thrive
Beneath Las Casas' pitying hand,
Who bade the drooping bough revive,
Till, like their own Vanilla, veiled
In mystery from the race accursed,
Again their weeping country hailed
Her royal stems, in secret nursed.
Even now, upon Chiapa's plain,
Our ancient arts in freedom reign :
The deathless wreath fair science gives,
Full many a young Cazique receives ;
Known but to them whose dearest pride
Were to lie slaughtered near his side.
Not these the upstart race, who reign
By sufferance of the crafty foe,
Exalted from the base born train,
To specious power and gilded show ;
But sons of those illustrious dead,
Who, each a warlike nation's head,
With royal banner wide unrolled,
Twice fifty thousand warriors led
To battle for the isle of gold.

" To boast were vain ; I will not tell
What streams in these blue channels swell ;
The deed may show :—no vulgar ire
Can feed so broad, so calm a flame,
Nor aught but princely hate aspire
To quarries of such noble game.
The deed shall show :—another night,
And vengeance waves her torch in light.

" Embosomed in a peaceful vale,
There dwelt—but wherefore spin the tale ?"
—A flush was on his frowning brow,
And fast the hurried accents flow :—
" 'Tis nought to thee who trained my mind,
The hater now of human kind,
I say but, of the hours I've known,
That once they were, and they are flown
Past, past—they come not if I would"—
He drained the cup, and then pursued.

" It was mid life's unfolding charm,
When hopes are high, and hearts are warm,
And young ambition, aiming wide,
Would grasp the world to prop his pride,
A guest, with wiles of Satan fraught,
Chiapa's peaceful dwellings sought ;
A Jesuit,—of Iberia's race,—
Inquisitor,—a monk of place,—

Vile titles all :—to add another,
 Yet viler, he was Gondolph's brother.
 He marked me, and he won my ear
 With tales wild boyhood loves to hear ;
 I knew not then what hidden bait
 Lured him in me to seek his fate ;
 But thus it seems—my birth was high,
 And many watched my destiny :
 Child, as I was, I oft had sate
 With those who rule our free-born state,
 Whose secret counsels may not pass
 Beyond the threefold bolts of brass :
 Some note of this had lately sped,
 —Oppression will not lack its spies,
 Nor tyranny forget to tread
 The mustering tempest ere it rise.
 Unwelcome rumors quickly flee,
 The tidings Priest Anselmo heard,
 And when he spread the twig for me,
 Deemed he might lime a chattering bird.
 So, while his flatteries won my ken,
 And lured me to the Spanish den,
 My treason was the corner-stone
 He built his towering hopes upon.
 Izram a traitor !"—Then he laughed
 In bitterness, and freely quaffed :—
 " No, not to them—O never, never,
 Could tongue of guile or forceful hand,
 The syren, or the dungeon sever
 Her Izram from his own sweet land :
 Blighted this arm, if e'er it flings
 Dishonour on the race of kings !

" In furtherance of their sage design,
 The Spanish seers received me well,
 And, deep in learning's fruitful mine,
 For me they ope'd the secret cell.
 I needs must laugh,—how, day by day,
 They laboured on the rugged way,
 And placed within my eager clasp
 Whate'er my spirit longed to grasp :
 No page of all their classic lore,
 But I had conned it o'er and o'er,
 And from the tomes of history torn
 New fuel for my burning scorn,
 Ere yet the purblind fools could dare
 To deem me wrapped within the snare.
 And still misgivings vexed their mind,
 A firmer tie the demons twined ;
 O would my tongue had never moved
 To tell it ! Albert, hast thou loved ?
 —Enough, enough ; that broken sigh,
 And mantling cheek, too well reply.
 It matters not ; I will not bend
 My thought to such bewildering theme,
 My spurning soul hath learned to rend
 The shreds of that deceitful drom ;
 Nor could thy tranquil spirit pine
 In love so wild, so deep as mine.

The sorcerers hoped this potent spell
 The patriot throb should lightly quell,
 This master-passion in my breast,
 Like Aaron's rod, engulf the rest ;
 If e'er their eyes His page explored,
 Whom they in blasphemy adored.

" Now Gondolph joined the robber band,
 Who gnaw the vitals, wring the land.
 Thou know'st, perchance, each plundering tool
 Is licenced to a short-lived rule :
 Three summers, decked in pomp and pride,
 They rack our race, our treasure drain,
 Then, wafted o'er th' indignant tide,
 Disgorge the spoil in hungry Spain.
 Long had this Gondolph ruled unseen
 The movements of a vast machine ;
 The guerdon of his toils to glean,
 He ploughed at length the azure deep ;—
 Oh, by this sickle, bright and keen,
 A plenteous harvest he shall reap !

" His was the crafty wile, that snared
 The heedless Mexican to rove ;
 His wizard hand the spell prepared,
 Of lofty lore, and witching love :
 And blithely now the traitor came,
 To light the pile with sulph'rous flame.
 In courteous guise, with flattering word,
 He led me to the festal board :
 Trained to his beck, the servile throng
 The revel and debauch prolong ;
 While he, with cool observance, sought
 In cobweb coil to snare the thought ;
 Essayed—the wine-cup freely plied—
 To wake the slumbering chord of pride ;
 But all was vain, no word revealed
 The charge in patriot honour sealed.
 Baffled and chafed, the tiger scowled,
 And hourly in my pathway prowled,
 And oft in joyous scorn I threw
 Some mocking hope before his view,
 Till weary of the secret snare,
 He laid his shameless purpose bear.
 A life, with wealth and greatness crowned,
 Ev'n to ambition's utmost bound,
 This was the bribe ; the threat was shame,
 The taint of slander's foulest breath,
 A curse attached to Izram's name
 Among his race, and lingering death.

" I know not how my scorn might blaze ;
 He quailed and shook beneath the gaze :
 And when, in proud indignant strain,
 I hurled the treason back on Spain,
 His lurking blood-hounds seized their prey,
 And bore me from the light of day,
 Chained with the felon crew, who pine
 Condemned within the deadliest mine.

Robber and murderer, side by side,
In groans and blood their labour plied—
Seest thou the scar those fetters wrought?
His look shall wither on the spot.

“Nor yet the crafty fox resigned
That dream of his besotted mind;
Still came the lure, the menace, still
He thought to bend my stedfast will:
He blighted my fair fame, and she,
Chord of my heart, its vital tide,
Compelled to wed a vile Mestee,
Became the motley mongrel's bride.
Anselmo's self the tale conveyed,
And well his generous zeal I paid:
Too weak the cowl to guard his brain
From the fierce dash of severed chain;
And while they thronged around the dead,
Goaded by maddening thought, I sped
Until the distant glimmering ray
Pointed to liberty and day.
I found a faithful few:—the rest
Is doubly sealed within my breast;
I doubt not thee, but oaths confine
Those secrets to our ancient line:
Yet if thy British nerve can brave
The horrors of an outlaw's cave,
And if thy strength in peril tried,
Can boldly breast a swelling tide.
Soon shall thy gladdened sight survey
Gondolph, by counter-wiles betrayed,
Groaning his blackened soul away,
An offering to thy brother's shade.”

“My brother's shade hath soared, to rest
In the calm mansions of the blest;
And there, at his Redeemer's throne,
He joins the rapturous song of praise,
To Him who hears the sinner's groan,
Jesus, whose pardoning love is shown
To ruined man's rebellious race.
And deem'st thou—if his spirit share
In aught of sublunary care—
My Ulric would not rather flee
On seraph wing to ward the blow,
And plead, by Him who died for thee,
“For mercy on a prostrate foe?”

“Forbear thy mockery, tongue of pride!
For me that Saviour never died.
Thou preaching friar forbear, and say,
My proffered courtesy dost thou take,
Till twice return the morning ray,
With me thy fixed abode to make?”

“Aye, Izram, and to save thy soul
The bitter fruit of deed so foul;
My wrong is deep, far deeper thine,
But vengeance is the work of God:

O let thy hand this task resign,
Submit thee to the chastening rod.
Revenge to carnal lip is sweet,
But kills the soul with poisonous breath;
And thou impenitent, wilt meet
The wages of eternal death.”

“Izram can neither pause nor fear;
His sin, if such the term, hath stored
The wrath of Heaven in long arrear,
And justice must unsheath the sword,
She still a deeper debt may owe—
But truce with this, the sun is low;
I pledge thee in a sweeter draught
Than yet thy thirsty lip hath quaffed;
Recline on yonder couch and steep
Thy feverish frame in cooling sleep:
Trust me, no cause for doubt or dread
While Izram watches nigh thy bed.
I love thy race—they never bore
A blood-stained trophy from my shore,
Save when the daring Buccaneer,
Scourge of the tyrants, hovered nigh,
And woke the Spaniard's startled ear,
With the fierce midnight battle-cry.
Thou dost not fear to speak me plain,
To cross me in my angry vein;
Nor dost thou shame to kneel and pray:—
Shading his sight, he turned away,
And Albert, with unruffled breast,
Composed his weary limbs to rest.

CANTO II.

Swart his repose, but strangely new
The waking scene; no lowly shed,
No waving forest caught his view;
A wide and vaulted cavern threw
Its mighty arch above his head.
A glimmering lamp in scanty flood
Dispersed its light, and Izram stood,
Folding his mantle round his breast,
Half veiled in the sepulchral gloom,
With thoughtful brow, and head depressed,
Viewing the couch of peaceful rest,
Like sculpture on a costly tomb.
“Wak'st thou, my friend?” the pensive tone,
That sorrow might have called her own,
Low as the ring-dove's plaintive sound,
By echoes caught, above, around,
Rang through the caves, and died away
In cadence like a funeral lay.
“Izram! explain this magic spell.”
“No magic, but the needful guile
Of souls oppressed; I watched thee well,
And practised nought but friendly wile.

Here is my palace, this my throne,
 A regal court, as thou shalt own,
 When my assembled boards bespeak
 The treasury of a young Cazique."
 Smiling, yet sad, he spoke, and drew
 A drapery's heavy fold aside ;
 Broad gleams of distant radiance threw
 A steady lustre far and wide.
 " Arise, the sun is high and bright,
 But never shot his living light
 Within these vaults : dark as the fame
 Of Mexico, they need the toil
 Of secret hands to raise the flame,
 And oft renew the wasting oil.
 Above, oppression's shaft is hurled,
 Below, the infant fires are nursed,
 That should the struggling splendours burst,
 With blazing flag shall cow the world.
 Tyrants engross the sunny sky,
 Be ours the den and liberty !"
 With stately port, and echoing tread,
 Through the long widening vault he led ;
 Passed a low arch, and dark alcove :—
 Where hath the spell our pilgrim borne ?
 Such wild illusion ne'er was wove
 In the fantastic dream of morn.

They stood beneath a lofty dome,
 Meet for the fabled geni's home ;
 The giant roof, bestud with spars,
 Shone as a host of distant stars.
 Here, crystal columns, shooting high,
 Dazzle and pain the blinking eye ;
 There, glowing as with secret fire,
 Slight shafts of wreathing gold aspire.
 Framed by the fairest rules of art,
 From every secret nook they start ;
 New treasures to the gaze unfold,—
 Gold was the couch, the table gold ;
 Wrought by the craftsman's cunning hand,
 In bright confusion, close array,
 Flagons, and bowls, and vases stand,
 And on their burnished sides display
 The swelling fruit, or garland fair ;—
 The very least that glittered there
 Had been an ample bribe, to gain
 Some kingly suit from grasping Spain.
 Quiver and bow and breast-plate hung
 Standards and feathery tufts among ;
 And sun-like orbs too well reveal
 The deadly dint of forceful steel :
 White pigmy plumes, of matchless dyes,
 Combined in graphic beauty, rise,
 Implanting in that rocky den
 The charms of mountain, mead, and glen.

Izram beneath his dark lash stole
 A glance, to read his comrade's soul.

" What say'st thou, Albert, can'st thou show
 In thy fair isle so rich a throne ?
 Nay, answer not ; full well I know
 She calls one glaucous gem her own,
 A jewel fraught with deathless rays,
 Whose faintest sparkles far outblaze
 Ten thousand gaudy scenes like this :
 Freedom and faith—O dream of bliss !"
 He paused, and slowly raising up
 From the bright board a costly cup,
 Viewed it a while, then fiercely fung
 On the firm floor that beaming gold ;
 Their peals the clamorous echoes rung,
 While to the utmost side it rolled.
 " I loathe the yellow dross, it hurled
 My fathers from a lordly throne,
 Ev'n as that bruised ore is whirled
 Along the ruthless stone.
 Metal accursed ! my brethren pine,
 Through thee, beneath an iron rod,
 Deep in the pestilential mine,
 O'er which their sires in glory trod.
 Now could I dash from side to side
 The fragments of this scenic pride ;
 But they have work to do, to sting,
 Ev'n to his very inmost soul,
 That Gondolph, that compounded thing
 Of wile and avarice ;—we will toll
 The death-knell on his shrinking ear,
 Amid the splendid mockeries here :
 Here, where his eye could never sate
 With gazing, we will seal his fate ;
 And I, the fettered slave, who drew
 A length of chain in poisonous mine,
 Will blight the tyrant's wildered view
 In garb besitting regal line.
 Thou, too, shalt glitter bright, in gems
 Meet for Imperial diadems :
 Weave diamonds in thy clustering hair,
 Like stars on evening's folding wing,
 And on thy very sandals bear
 The ransom of an eastern king,"
 " No gems for me."—" And wherefore thwart
 Each purpose of my labouring heart ?"
 " Nay, Izram, smooth thy brow, nor deem
 I cross thy will in sullen mood ;
 But how shall rich array beseeem,
 Or brilliants pour their sparkling beam,
 Amid the specks of kindred blood ?
 Scarce dry upon my conscious vest
 The stream that welled from Ulric's breast ;
 Behold !"—" The hour of doom is near,
 Let vengeance stay that bursting tear :
 Fraternal love hath gemmed thy cheek
 With drops to shame our Indian mine,
 And Izram's heart perchance could speak
 In tone as kindly and as meek
 As ever woke the pulse of thine :
 But I will drown that pleading breath

In the loud trumpet blast of death :
Retain thy simple weed, to roll
Its witness on the murderer's soul ;
Dark be thy wrath as frowning night,
And mine as dire volcano bright."

Swift as the linnet from the spray,
His lightsome step hath sped away ;
And Albert breathes the secret groan,
For woes more lasting than his own.
" So young, so beauteous, so enslaved
To Satan's bidding—lost—depraved
By sins unnumbered : yet he spoke
Of pleadings he would fain control ;
Perchance the Lord indeed hath woke
A voice within his conscious soul.
' Freedom and faith, a dream of bliss'—
Oh would that waking prize were his !
My spirit loathes his foul intents,
Yet with a mother's woe laments ;
Gladly I'd brave a life of pains,
To wrest him from these burning chains.
Confederate in his fell design,

Leagued to destroy, yet fixed to save
His victim,—Saviour, be it mine
' To call this slumberer from the grave !
Bid him awake, and rise to view
Beams that can pierce his darkness through.
It were a miracle—what less
Could change our heart of mortal mould ?
Speak, and the work is done—now bless
Thy word—O Lord, our Righteousness,
Conduct this wanderer to thy fold !"

While yet he breathed the broken prayer,
The fiery Mexican was there :
He came on Albert's wondering sight,
Like some gay dream of fairy sprite :
His form, in snow-white vest arrayed,
Its beauteous symmetry displayed ;
Soft as the wing of summer fly,
His robe outshone the Tyrian dye !
Each naked arm a circlet wore
Of pearls to shame a regal store ;
The emerald and the ruby graced
His ancles, tissued gold his waist.
The plumes—his country's coronet—
Enwreathed among his locks of jet,
With every gesture waving, bow
Majestic o'er his graceful brow.
Their quills in clustering diamonds bound,
They breathed a costly perfume round,
And rivalled, in their glancing dyes,
The glories of the western skies.
The tress confined, his brow was bare,
Softened in thought, and pale with care.
Though from his eye-beam toil had rest
Awhile the fervid blaze of noon,
Yet all the floating light was left

That steals around the midnight moon.
A naked dirk his belt displayed,
Its ivory hilt with gold inlaid,
And rich with gems ; the tempered blade
Gleamed a blue death-fire, sternly bright ;
And Albert's sickening thought surveyed
The unborn horrors of the night.
Abrupt he spoke, " Thou dazzling sin,
I would thou wert as fair within."
" Nay, Albert, all within is dark ;
These gauds no living lustre shed ;
Revenge alone, with crimson spark,
Lights the drear mansions of the dead.
It is for such as thee to dwell
In rays that demons cannot quell.
My soul is black as thunder's cloud,—
The gathering peal will echo loud,
And fierce the flash : this lurking gloom
Is but the shade of Gondolph's tomb.
I have not slumbered since I lay
Beneath the jaguar's gaze—Away !
We'll to the bowl, and nectar drain,
Till young life bound in every vein."

" And would'st thou feed the angry mood,
With wilder fire inflame thy blood,
Hurl reason from her tottering throne,
And change thy heart to very stone !
O drink thou of the stream that swells
Far from the scenes of ruthless strife,
Drawn from the everlasting wells,
That spring beneath the tree of life."
In wayward humour, Izram flung
His limbs upon a couch of pride,
Its canopy with plumage hung,
And feigning regal scorn, replied—
" What ! bar me from the gen'rous bowl ?
Ev'n here my lordly will control ?
Rebel, wilt thou dethrone thy king ?"
" Jest not, but heed."—" I will not hear ;
If but one native note I sing,
These royal echoes straight will ring,
With descent meet for monarch's ear.
Now mark."—In cadence sweet and strong
Sudden he raised a lofty song.

IZRAM.

" Line, in the annals of glory known,
" Where have ye hidden your ancient throne ?
" Throbs no bold current in regal vein ?
" Be ye the vassals of ruffian Spain ?
" The base surmise from my soul I fling—
" Ye are the nation ; where is your king ?"
Richly the clear melodious sound
Floats through the sparry caverns round ;
And ere the notes could melt away,
Abruptly rose an answering lay ;
Strong voices pealed it loud and nigh,
Filling the vaults with harmony.

VOICES.

"Deep, where the heavings of life arise,
 "Deep in the subject's heart he lies ;
 "Deep, where the infant gem is born,
 "He tramples the yellow gold in scorn :
 "His tapestried hall is the crystal stone,
 "The diamond his lamp, and the rock his throne."

IZRAM.

"Once, where the isle's blue waters swell,
 "Her princes fought, and her nobles fell ;
 "The meanest in Aztlan's native train
 "Was peer for the proudest that forge their chain.
 "Soft through its channel the pure wave runs,
 "Shrouding the heroes—Where are their sons?"

VOICES.

"Deep, where the close pent air abides ;
 "Deep, where the flood its fountain hides ;
 "Deep, where the young volcano's nursed ;—
 "Woe to the land when their rage shall burst !
 "Soon may the volume of fate unfold
 "That the sons are true, as the sires were bold."

IZRAM.

"Where are the counsels, wise and brave,
 "To guide the ship through the troublous wave ?
 "The skill to watch for the breaking morn,
 "The league to bind and the word to warn ?
 "The glimmering sparks of a rising blaze,
 "And the heart-cheering records of olden days?"

VOICES.

"Deep in the bosoms of patriot worth ;
 "Deep in the soil that gives them birth ;
 "Deep in the symbol of mystic lore,
 "That never shall treachery's gaze explore ;
 "The root is spreading below—the tree
 "Shall rise in a banner of pride for thee."

Triumphant pealed the closing strain ;
 The very echoes seemed to glow
 With patriot ardour ; oft again,
 When the bold note was sinking low,
 Some distant cavern caught the tone,
 And made the lofty lay its own,
 And gave it back again, to swell
 And rise, through many a winding cell ;
 Careering round the giant dome,
 As though some pitying forms of air
 Blended the wild sweet chorus there,

To grace an exiled monarch's home.
 Albert, entranced, a while forgot
 The captive's doom, the murderer's lot,
 Yearning to bid the caves prolong,
 And still renew that thundering song.
 The full red torches flickered wide,
 The banners waved in martial pride,
 Sparkled the crystals ; Izram's eye,
 To ecstasy relit, and raised
 In uncurbed majesty on high,
 With answering splendour keenly blazed.

The sound dissolved, the spell was broke,
 Drooping his waving plumes he spoke.
 "Hearts fond and true ! far other meed
 Than darksome den, and venturous deed,
 From Izram, might ye claim. Now speak,
 Thou silent Briton ; well I trace,
 In the bold blood that warms thy cheek,
 The fervour of thy freeborn race.
 What miracle hath struck thee dumb—
 The preacher by the man o'ercome ?"

"Perchance some tinge of honest shamo,
 For slight respect to monarch shown ;
 Thy sin I hate, the sinner blame ;
 And if, thy regal rank unknown"—
 "O peace, my friend ; my brother, peace :
 When thy bold faithful counsels cease,
 Izram is lost indeed : I love
 To hear thy fearless tongue reprove,
 But deemed it well to show thy speech
 To other ears than mine might reach.
 These caverns teem with life ; a race
 Of nobles, this dark dwelling grace.
 They know the jaguar's dauntless foe,
 Thy daring deed, thy wrongs they know ;
 But other themes bescem them not :
 Think'st thou my single arm could bring
 Thee slumbering from the woodland cot ?
 'That were a feat for fairy king.'

While thus in playful grace he spoke,
 Sudden the startling echoes woke,
 As though a wide battalion sped,
 With one broad flash, the winged lead.
 Izram is on his feet : his lip
 Quivers ; his veins to blackness swell :
 "They come ! triumphant vengeance dip
 Deep in the flames, where demons dwell,
 Thy crimson torch !" With furious stride,
 Swift to the central space he hied :
 Then with a whistle, loud and shrill
 As eagle's scream, the signal gave ;
 And figures, darkly mantled, fill
 The niches of each opening cave :
 On every head bright plumage played,
 The rest was wrapped in folding shade.

Their chieftain waves the circling sign,
And sternly speaks—"No hand but mine."
Their lofty crests in silence bow,
And the fair plumes dance on every brow.

Again th' exulting echoes rung,
While wide a massy door was flung,
And fiercely struggled, half repressed,
The burning ire in Albert's breast,
And wildly throbbed his temperate blood,
When to his frowning glance confessed
His brother's murderer stood:
'Twas nature's fever; mercy rolled
Her current, and the fire controlled.
Blinded beneath the burst of light,
The Spaniard veiled his aching sight;
Then proudly, with expanding eye,
Drew his majestic form on high,
And firmly stepped, with measured pace,
The features of his foe to trace.

The youth in bitter mockery
Bent, till the plumes had kissed his knee,
Then tossed them, while with fiery gaze
His eye belied the courtly phrase,—
"Thrice welcome be th' Iberian lord
To exiled Izram's humble board."
(Full well betrayed the sudden start
How shot that name through Gondolph's heart.)
"Fain would the Mexican repay,
Well as attainted traitor may,

The rites of Gondolph's princely dome,
That cheered his spirit many a day,
Ere yet his steps behoved to roam."
Then burst the smothered fury high,
"Ruffian! thine hour of doom is nigh!"
Calm, in his fixed obdurate pride,
The Spaniard spoke, untouched by fear;
"While Izram in my view shall bide,
Murder, I judge, must needs be near."
Darting his glances round, they rest
On Albert's form, and crimson vest:
Shrunk the firm eye. "What! can ye call
The dead to your infernal hall?
And who are these? a goodly train,
Fresh reeking from the lash and chain;—
Ye native bondsmen lured to stray,
By this mad boy, from duty's way,
Liegemen of Spain! the crime disown;
Those dainty limbs in fetters bind,
Bend to your sovereign's outraged throne,
Forgiveness seek; his royal mind
The grace will freely grant." A sound
Of stifled laughter murmured round.
"Before our sovereign's outraged throne,
Duteous we bend: we'll bind him well;
In fetters he shall joy to own,
Ev'n loyal love's securest spell."

With dimpling smile and glowing cheek,
Izram exclaims, "Essay once more;
Pardon's faint breath is all too weak,—
What think'st thou, if the glittering store
Of wealthy Spain might change their song?
Gold, gold, my lord is wondrous strong.
If all thy bandit tribes could drain
Forth from the land's exhausted vein,
Since first they trod the vanquished isle,
And all the coffered hoards of Spain
Were rifled out to swell the pile,
That mass might almost match the place
That Gondolph's presence deigns to grace."
Then in a tone more sternly slow,
Where hate and pride commingling glow,
"Hear, thou abhorred! this costly mine
Were but the shadow of a shade,
Measured by those our princely line
Have never to the grasp betrayed
Of impious foes. Our stores could buy
Fleets to command the subject waves,
Cities to pierce the wondering sky,
Empires for toys, and kings for slaves."

The Spaniard curled his lip in scorn—
"Methinks the yoke is lightly borne:
Why club ye not your stores, to buy
The glittering bauble, liberty?
Why bribe ye not, with ample pence,
Some stout ally to chase us hence,
And on their ancient seat replace
Your puny and diminished race?"

A sullen murmur muttering crept
From the dark bands; and Izram stepped,
Glaring beneath his scowling brow,
Like a chafed lion on the foe:
"Burning mid everlasting fires,
In torments yell your murderous sires;
Mated with him, who first in crime,
Brought ruin into Eden's clime.
Diminished! aye, beneath the yoke
How many a gallant heart hath broke!
How have the mighty bowed in death,
Blighted by pestilential breath;
The beauteous drooped, and died away
Before oppression's blasting ray;
Leaving a remnant firm and true,
Noble and brave—but oh how few!
Shall we profane our sacred store,
And bribe some distant robber band,
Greedy of sordid hire, to pour
Destruction on the groaning land?
Earth from her dregs could ne'er defile
Our country with a pest so vile,
Nor vomit forth a crew so base
As dark Iberia's felon race;

Yet seek we not with foreign steel
 The ripening crop of weeds to mow,
 A parricidal hand shall deal
 With deeper gash the destined blow,
 And o'er your pride, your towering pride,
 In bold career exulting ride.
 There lurks, within the womb of fate,
 A sorer pang, a deadlier bane,
 Than eastern scorn or western hate
 Could mingle in the cup of Spain :
 Spawn from her own corruption bred,
 Then on their putrid parent fed.
 Oft hath my spirit rose in glee,
 A glimpse of coming times to see,
 When the unwieldy cub shall breathe
 Defiance in his parent's teeth ;
 To hear the angry beldame chide,
 In contest with the heedless air ;
 Her blood-stained talons stretching wide,
 Across th' Atlantic's laughing tide,
 In impotent despair."

" Thou taunting fool ! though wayward fate
 The augury of thy brain-sick hate
 Should e'en fulfil, what higher grace
 Than change of lords awaits thy race ?
 Loosened awhile the servile chain,
 Tools for their need, then locked again."

" Take thou no care for that : we hold
 The master-key, the secret gold :
 Let Liberty's resplendent eye
 Once beam, then farewell jealousy !
 Let freedom's lightsome banner play,
 And, brethren, leagued in firm array,
 We conquer, or we die !
 What reck we,—so your caittiff blood
 Be mingled with your cities' mud ;
 What reck we,—so your leaguered town
 Re-echo to the thundering guns ;
 Though they who spill the crimson flood,
 And rend the flaunting standard down,
 And trample on the empty crown,
 Should be the tyrant's sons ?
 Just heaven, retributive in wrath,
 Will hide that serpent in your path,
 In memory of the shameful wile,
 That lured the bands of Tlascala
 To mingle in the impious fray,
 Against th' imperial isle.
 Then shall Chiapa's sons arise,
 And pour the reeking sacrifice
 To names that in her mystic roll
 Live to inflame the warrior's soul.
 Long by your blinking race forgot,
 Their eye can mark the very spot
 Where the firm aim of justice sped
 The bolt to Montezuma's head :

To vengeful gaze the site unfold,
 Where rose Mexitli's pile of gold,
 The temple of an erring croed,
 But sanctified by noblest deed,
 In history's page enrolled.
 There, in his sacrilegious pride,
 Glutting his savage eye with blood,
 Presiding o'er the purple tide,
 The fell hyena, Cortez, stood.
 Aside their spears and quivers flung,
 'Twas there the princely brothers came,
 And, kneeling, to his mantle clung,
 Bold barter ! with a moment's shame
 To purchase never-dying fame,
 And venge their country's cause : around,
 In suppliant guise, their arms they wound,
 With awful pause, a breathless space,
 The homage in abhorrence given,
 —Twin seraphs dwelling on the face
 Of that arch-rebel spurned from heaven—
 They bent on his accursed brow,
 With upward gaze, the beaming eye,
 And silently arose the vow,
 Not to the tyrant, but the sky.
 They pointed to the battle plain,
 Where swelled and sunk, in plummy surge,
 The billows of the fight ; they strain
 Their youthful sinews ; bend, and gain,
 With their dark prize, the giddy verge :
 Wreathing in stern embrace their prey,
 They hurl them from the height ;
 Wrapped like the sinking orb of day,
 In a shroud of native light."

" But watchful Heaven preserved its own ;
 The wily traitors died alone."

"Alone ! how deep the conscious flood
 Blushed with the taint of Spanish blood,
 And murmured, in its patriot bed
 To harbour such polluting dead,
 When, sickening deep with wild affright,
 Beneath the favouring veil of night,
 The panting robbers fled for life,
 And perished in the causeway strife !
 Alone ! why every element
 Hath leagued in freedom's sacred cause ;
 The earth her firm enclosure rent,
 And opened her devouring jaws :
 Along your veins the fire hath crept,
 While pestilence, with vengeful gust,
 Wide o'er your vaunting armies swept,
 And breathed them into dust.
 Your crimes the circling years rehearse,
 Pointing the deep unuttered curse :
 The glorious sun looks fiercely down,
 And withers you with scorching frown ;
 The sullen mists enfold you round,
 And strike unseen the aguish wound :

Ye spread the banquet, rich and fair,
 Intemperance drops her poison there :
 While lazy monks the gains devour
 Of many a long laborious hour,
 And tax you with a galling price
 For juggling feats and fooleries.
 Homeward the shrivelled remnant wend,
 Wasted by care, debauch, and toil,
 As yellow as the gold they rend,
 And parched like the exhausted soil ;
 Their public seal the robbers show,
 Murder's black signet stamps the brow ;
 And grinning fiends, with greedy eyes,
 Unnoticed haunt each branded prize.
 Methinks I view the victims rolled
 In burning seas of molten gold,
 And hear the taunts, the laughter shrill,
 ' Now, sons of avarice, grasp your fill.' "

With ghastly smile the Spaniard sought
 To veil the pang of shuddering thought.
 " Albeit thy phrase is aptly set,
 I weary of the prating speech ;—
 A wondering congregation met
 To hear one half-taught savage preach.
 I ween 'twas in Anselmo's school
 Thou learn'dst to rail and rant by rule."

His mock the youth unruffled heard :—
 " Thou yet shalt bide that railing word,
 My private wrong will plead in vain ;
 This blade a nation's vengeance wrecks,
 Not Izram to Almaraz speaks,
 But Mexico to Spain.
 Cast round thine eye and view the spoil,
 Of free-born hands the willing toil,
 Relics of matchless worth : behold
 Those arrows in their sheaths of gold,
 Studded with gems : the rusted darts,
 Drawn from the robbers' quivering hearts ;
 The warrior belts of jewels twined,
 Yon plummy crowns with pearls combined :
 Elastic plates of scaly mail,
 For manly war ; too slight and frail
 To bide the dint of murderous lead,
 From Spain's infernal engines sped.
 These plume-wrought banners, drooping now
 Beneath the sheltering earth, again
 To combat borne, shall float and bow,
 Rejoicing, o'er the piles of slain,
 While Guatimozin's battle-word
 Loud through the vengeful field is heard,
 And hearts of wrath intensely flame
 At that imperial martyr's name ;
 And mocking demons blithely spread,
 In nether gulfs, such flowery bed
 For your eternal rest, as lay
 Glowing beneath your guiltless prey :

Though slumbering justice linger yet,
 Deeply she'll pay the burning debt.—
 Gondolph, now sate thy favoured eye
 On that mysterious treasury,
 Whose warrior monarch, firm in will,
 Baffled thy father's fiendish skill ;
 Constant in torture, shame, and death,
 To us the rich bequest he gave,
 And ne'er till now Iberian breath
 Tainted the golden cave :
 But thou hast earned the grace to fall
 Within this dungeon's glittering wall."

" Aye, like the captive heroes, slain
 Beneath your hideous idol-fane ;
 Whose heart-pulse, bared by butcher-knife,
 Bounded and throbb'd with struggling life
 On the foul shrine, and slaked the thirst
 Of ruthless cannibals ; accursed
 By earth and heaven. What did we more
 Than baulk your gods of human gore ?
 Dispatching with a swifter stroke
 Those tens of thousands doomed to die,
 Beneath Mexitli's demon yoke,
 In torture, rage, and blasphemy.
 Had fate restrained the righteous hand,
 That swept this wrath-devoted land,
 Your sacrificial knives had gored
 More victims than our conquering sword."

With eye reproachful, sad, and stern,
 Fixed the dark youth his piercing gaze :
 " And came your Christian band to turn
 Those sinners from destruction's ways ?
 To burst the veil of mental night,
 And spread their hoard of gospel light
 Wide o'er the lovely fertile spot,
 Enrobed, by Him we worshipped not,
 In Eden's garb ? the fairest gem
 On nature's brilliant diadem.
 Ye found a clime where seraph guest
 Might fold the downy wing and rest ;
 Eptome of every grace
 Strewed o'er creation's dwelling-place ;
 As western skies had kissed the earth,
 Enamoured of herauteous birth,
 And stamped their tints, divinely fair,
 On every tribe that nestled there,
 Till bird, and flower, and insect glowed,
 Bright as the vesper sun's abode ;
 And deep the burning radiance rolled,
 Ripening her very dust to gold ;
 And kindling in her caverns drear
 Such diamond sparks as glimmer here.
 Spreads not the lake its crystal breast
 To woo again that azure guest ?
 While emulous, with crested brow,
 Cedar and balm arise to bow ;

And Andes, in officious love,
Impels his giant bulk above,
To prop the glorious arch, and shroud
His head in evening's purple cloud.

So nature wrought: admiring man
With duteous zeal pursued the plan;
Culling, to deck his varied store,
The charm she wove, the robe she wore
Nurtured the infant race of flowers
In broad parterre, and perfumed bowers:
Leading the silvery founts to play
Through sculptured forms in freshening spray;
Taught the transparent beam to roam
On marble wall, and jasper dome;
Earth's secret treasures displayed
In pillared porch and colonnade:
Lofty and bold the turrets swell,
As mountains from the western dell;
Innumerable and bright they blaze,
As dew-drops in the morning's gaze:
And softly smiled the star of eve,
Where gold and flowers the net enwreath;
While, in unfelt captivity,

Their wildest notes the warblers sing,
And spread beneath a mimic sky
The glancing crest, and glorious wing,
Till, rich in death, their beauties live
In prouder tints than art can give:
Dear was that native skill—how dear
The few poor wrecks that moulder here!

"Nor lordly man unlettered trod
The glittering court and sylvan sod:
In nature's darkest thralldom pent,
Her chain his soaring spirit rent,
Rose through the wildering mist, and caught
The day-beam of inspiring thought;
Science illumed his searching eye,
And empire crowned his policy:
Through space unmeasured, undefined,
He led the conquering march of mind;
Firm as the targe his shoulder bore,
And pliant as the plume he wore.
Ye say, that, o'er this dazzling scene,
Spirits of ill, and powers unclean,
Usurping, rolled an impious flood
Of cruelty, pollution, blood;
While ye, in heaven-sent mercy, came
To blanch the blushing spot of shame,
And plant upon the guilty sod
The banner of a Saviour-God.

"Piercing the soft complying moss,
Securely stands your mocking cross;
And forward wends your pious tread,
By avarice goaded, strumpet-led,
Forward! your church hath blessed the strife,
Your arms are primed, and gold is rife

A monarch feeds your craving eyes
With glittering ore, and gems of price:
Grasp at your will the tempting store,
Persuasive guns shall plead for more.
Forward! the young blade never bent
Beneath a mounted armament;
The fools combine, in erring plan,
Each noble beast with ruffian man,
And judge artillery's thunder given
From the dark cloud that wraps their heaven.
Then, while the awe-struck tribes discern
These monster-gods in mission zeal,
Your righteous creed they quickly learn,
Baptized in blood, and shrived with steel.
Forward! some million harmless lives
Must dew your consecrated knives:
Shout, while ye drive the weapon home,
'The gold for Spain! the gore for Rome!'

"Blasphemer, cease!"—"Indulge the mood,
For I am born of stubborn blood:
My sires, who yon bright banner bore,
Would none of Rome's pacific lore:
They knew not Quiahisian's league,
Nor Zempoalla's dark intrigue;
Nor, like the Tlascalan, unbound,
With rending hand, their country's wound:
Descending from a regal throne,
They made the empire's cause their own;
They towered amid the battle swell,
And bravely fought, and freely fell.
Victims for Gautimozin's sake,
What time he spread his galley's wing,
And launched upon the fatal lake,
That murmured round her captive king,
Tradition tells the crimson stain
On yonder shield was drawn from Spain;
And vengeance whispers, 'Now renew
With kindred dye its faded hue.'

"Here dwell the very gods who led
Your fathers to the western shore,
Sustaining their infuriate tread,
Through leagured hosts and seas of gore.
Those golden gods, so safely stored
In guise of pillar, couch, and board;
These flagons, where the deep-set rim
Of sparkling rubies crowns the brim;
For these they dared the battle plain,
For these ye plough the briny main;
Such faith your pious deeds rehearse,
Your deities, your spoil, your curse."

"And meet it is your yellow ore
Should swell the Christian's sacred store;
From unbelievers rent by Heaven,
And to its saints in guerdon given."

From Albert's lips an answer came,
 In accent stern he uttered, "Shame!
 The Lord will that foul charge disown;
 Dishonour not the sacred name
 By which the Christian band are known.
 He who the mild commandment gave,
 'Love ye the strangers,' loved them well;
 He came not to destroy but save,
 Mercy to teach, and rage to quell.
 He came to heal, He came to bind
 The broken heart, and wounded mind.
 He licensed not the ruthless sword,
 He values not the glittering hoard;
 Who e'er shall base allegiance owe
 To mammon is Jehovah's foe.
 Peace is His word, His banner love,
 His work the stony heart to move;
 His mercy, boundless, endless, free,
 Gondolph, may even reach to thee:
 To thee His grace can yet display
 The fount, the purifying flood,
 And from thy spirit roll away
 That fearful spot—the guilt of blood."
 On Albert's shoulder Izram pressed
 A gentle hand—"My brother cease:
 Beam not upon his gloomy breast
 The words of tenderness and peace.
 Sealed by his crimes, that eye is dim;
 Preach to the rocks, but not to him."
 "Dear Izram, do not bar my word"—
 With proud derision Gondolph heard,
 And laughed—"Dear Izram"—'brother'—
 see
 How well may infidels agree!
 The heretic, whose sturdy breed
 Is famed for many a daring deed,
 The English mastiff, meet to chase
 A herd of Mexico's faint race,—
 Let but our holy faith appear,
 Scourge of the unbelieving mind,
 And straight we view the dog and deer
 In goodly fellowship combined.
 Briton, what mak'st thou here the while?
 Some envoy from the upstart isle,
 Sent to explore this wondrous show,
 Balance the peril 'gainst the bribe,—
 And surely ye were worthier foe
 To cope with than this woman tribe.
 Slaves! 'neath the conquering bands of Spain,
 When havoc's glorious day begun,
 Their armies darkened hill and plain,
 And millions were opposed to one:
 Crouching before a warrior's frown,
 The trembling dastards lay in shoals;
 Our weary chargers trod them down,
 And trampled out their worthless souls.
 Cortez had won a nobler fame,
 Had fate provided bolder game."

By the rude taunt to madness stung,
 Izram with brandished dagger sprung;
 On high the flashing weapon shone—
 "To Cortez and the fiends begone!"
 Ere on the scowling foe he closed,
 Albert his fierce career opposed.
 "Izram, forbear; as thou would'st plead
 For mercy in thy dearest need,
 Slay not a soul."—"Now on thy life,
 Unloose thy hold, or dread the knife!"
 Foaming, he writhed, in wild disdain,
 Beneath that nervous grasp; in vain.
 Borne back a space by Albert's hand,
 He rallied to a desperate stand:
 With arm aloft, and breast to breast,
 Each in the grapple firmly stood;
 One movement—Izram's snowy vest
 Is dark with Albert's blood.

Forth rushed the band: tumultuous swell
 Discordant tones through vault and cell;
 Relaxed was Albert's straining grasp,
 Yet do his fingers faintly clasp
 The falling wrist:—to distance thrown,
 Rings the keen dirk upon the stone.
 Round Gondolph swords and daggers shine,
 But Izram bars the stern design.
 "Go, to the inner dungeon-grot
 Bear him away, but harm him not:
 A deeper vengeance yet shall drain
 The pois'nous tide from every vein."
 Beneath his comrade's drooping weight
 Oppressed, he bends the trembling knee,
 And groans. "Oh, wretch accursed by fate!
 My brother, have I murdered thee?"
 Albert's faint smile consoling broke—
 "Haste, strip the arm, explore the wound!"
 A channel, rived by slanting stroke,
 Was swiftly closed, and smoothly bound,
 And, on his lip the cordial poured,
 He breathed to life and sense restored.
 "Unhappy Izram! hast thou wrought
 All the fell purport of thy thought?"
 "The monster lives; I would not blend
 His blood with thine: impetuous friend,
 Why would'st thou urge thy headlong way
 Between the tiger and his prey?
 That smile! it spoke of yesternorn—
 I marvel not: thy race were born
 To rule the realms of earth, and ride
 Triumphant o'er the stormy tide."

Reclined within the gloomy shade,
 Albert in sweet repose is laid;
 And Izram guards his sleeping guest,
 As eagles tend their rock-built nest:
 The waking hour, in deep debate,
 Teems with the sullen captive's fate

Wavers the chief, but who shall chain
The vengeance of his princely train?
Or who, should Gondolph 'scape, defend
The remnant of their scattered line,
From raging avarice, prompt to rend
The treasure from the secret mine?
"Thou heard'st me tell of many a hoard,
By foreign tyrant ne'er explored;
Tortures would rack, and flames devour,
While I just surmised one hidden store:
Thou would'st not crush my race, to save
This felon from a well-earned grave?"

While pondering yet, they hear the throng
Of hurried footsteps wend along:
The Mexicans in wrath surround
A comrade, pale, disarmed, and bound.
Few words the angry charge explain—
"Gondolph by Nepuel's dirk is slain."
"I slew him not: let Izram hear,
From justice I have nought to fear.
Few moons have waned, since in a strife
Alvarez Gondolph saved my life
From one of his own band: he gave
Chastisement to the vaunting slave,
And pardoned me; yet claimed a meed,
And swore me at his hour of need,
To succour him in turn: he came,
A captive, doomed to die in shame.
Pacing on guard before his cell,
He saw me, and remembered well.
He sought the boon, but had it led
To fight or treason, ne'er had sped.
Yielding, although I might not slay,
I gave my dirk, and turned away:
There lies the tyrant, grim in death,
Leaving my fate to Izram's breath."

"Nepuel, thou should'st have shunned his
sight:
Justice hath sternly claimed her right.
I censure, but the deed forgive—
Confirm it friends, and bid him live."

Dispersed the train; yet lingered nigh
A chief, who looked on Izram's eye.
"How liketh thou Nepuel's tale? what mood,
Save treason, could the Spaniard seek
From such as he? a fouler deed
Was pondered: it hath tongue to speak
A bond in treachery allied—
Infection may be spreading wide:
Some brows are glooming here: I would
Our step were free beyond the flood."
He parted, and to Albert's ear
Izram revealed his comrade's fear.
"What meant he by the flood?"—"The wave
That rolls around this island cave."

"An island!"—"Aye, thou ne'er hadst thought
How far thy sleeping bulk was brought;
But whether o'er the waters sped,
Or deep beneath their solid bed,
I may not utter; nor betray,
No, not to thee, the secret way.
Yet must I bear thee hence. I know
These vaults enshroud some viper foe:
And Nepuel's deed reveals a clue,
Obscurely marked on Xloti's view,
Full clear to mine—too clear. I go,
To look upon the prostrate foe:
I'll bid this lamp more brightly burn,
But slumber not till I return."

Scarce on the ear his step could die,
A mantled figure, hovering nigh,
Deliberate trod, and seemed to peer
Irresolute amid the shade:
Albert—the Christian knows no fear—
Calmly the towering form surveyed,
And rising, with unruffled brow,
The challenge gave—"Say, what art thou?"
"Peace, Briton; hear, but answer not:
I know thee; thou art firm and brave;
Brief be my speech—a darksome blot
Of treason taints this fatal cave.
That royal youth,—thou lov'st him well,—
Speed him away, and time shall tell
I counselled wisely: let him go,
My hand shall crush the darkling foe.
Izram, secure in fancied power,
Would fire the train ere ripe the hour.
Bold boy! how wide that soul sublime
Had flourished in a kindlier clime!
Nurtured like fawn to lady dear,
He dreamed not of the savage chase,
Nor trembled when that note of fear
Was borne amid his cowering race,
He gambolled with the hounds that drew
His sportive step to grace their den,
Curious their reeking fangs to view,
Displayed his harmless pearls again,
And tossed his budding antlers wide,
In the free play of fearless pride.
Thou seest in him a portrait fair
Of Aztlan's hero-kings that were.
Swells in his veins the current bold
Of many a monarch, famed of old;
Caziques, who battled, conquered, fell,
Spurning the chain: in memory's cell
He stores their deeds, with tales that dye
The page of eastern chivalry:
Thanks to the self-deluding foe,
Who taught his martial fire to glow.
Thus trained, he decks a dastard crew
In his own spirit's ardent hue;
And loth were I to break the charm,
Till he be safe from treach'rous harm."

His fiery nature could not brook
 The stigma on his ancient line ;
 He bends no deep enquiring look
 In hollow hearts—they sound and shine,
 In seeming loyalty ; they soothe
 The princely dreams of sanguine youth,
 And speak him fair : but come the hour
 Of trial, they are winnowed bran :—
 Alas ! that tyranny hath power
 To quell the gen'rous soul of man."

" Stranger, I deem thy counsel good ;
 But think'st thou of the circling flood ?
 Izram for me shall ne'er betray
 His solemn trust, the secret way.
 Wounded, I could not swim the lake"—
 " Proffer the drowsy cup to take :
 Dar'st thou ?"—" I will."—" He seeks the cell ;
 Bold, honest Briton, fare thee well !
 Whate'er the victim's changeful lot,
 Albert and Xloti fail him not."

Izram approached with panting breath ;
 And clasping Albert's hand,—his own
 Chill as with oozing damps of death,—
 Vented his thought in smothered tone.
 " Now can I thank thy martyr zeal ;
 I cannot hate the ghastly dead :
 And gnawing shame my soul would feel
 For stroke on foe defenceless sped,
 In madness was Anselmo slain ;
 By frenzy nerved, I rent the chain ;
 It smote him, but I scarcely know
 If chance or purpose dealt the blow.
 How farest thou now ?"—" Alert and well,
 But weary of this darksome cell ;
 The beams of heaven so brightly shine,
 So sweet is the unfettered air"—
 " Alas how many captives pine,
 Pent in a deeper, darker mine,
 And wither in despair !
 Compatriots ! agonizing theme
 Of morning sigh and midnight dream !
 They think upon the meads that lie
 Smiling beneath their own blue sky ;
 They think upon the light that plays
 Over their native stream,
 The evening breeze that softly strays,
 And midnight's silver beam ;
 And eyes of glancing love, that shone
 Through blissful hours, for ever gone.
 They look upon the sullen lamps
 That glimmer through the fetid damps,
 Inhale their pois'nous breath,
 In feeble moan for freedom cry,
 Stretch their discoloured limbs, and lie
 Cold in the grasp of death."

His quivering lip no more could say,
 So high the sad emotion swelled ;

And Albert's tear had forced its way,
 And trickled to the hand he held.
 " Soon will the wrathful Judge arise,
 And tyrants crouch in hopeless dread,
 While earth, beneath those awful eyes
 Unveiled, reveals her countless dead.
 Oceans of blood shall then appear,
 Appealing to Jehovah's ear
 With piercing cry. Thy country's wrong,
 The theme of record, tale, and song,
 Hath oft, in study's silent hour,
 Through my young spirit chilling crept ;
 Within my own sweet native bower,
 My veins have burned, mine eye hath wept,
 While aaked my heart in restless pain,
 ' Why doth the Lord so long refrain ?
 Why hurl not from her sanguine throne
 The impious harlot Babylon ?
 With strong right hand her pride control,
 Bidding the stern oppressor cease,
 Breathe freedom on her captive soul,
 And on the wounded spirit peace ?'
 The joyous dawn approaches fast,
 Soon shall the night of woe be past,
 And earth's awakened millions sing
 Hosanna to their Saviour-King.
 Yet hope not thou the wrath of man
 Shall work Jehovah's righteous plan.
 The feeblest tyrant reigns within,
 The fetter of our kind is sin ;
 Nor mortal hand may break the chain,
 Nor earthly flash illumine our night ;
 Powerless the carnal sword : in vain
 Pale reason sheds her dubious light.
 When nations hear the call divine,
 Summoned to rise, and taught to shine,
 Faith is the shield, the weapon prayer,
 Eternal truth the day-star fair.
 I marked thee, while the kindling ire
 Shot from thine eye portentous fire ;
 The burning phrase that clad thy thought
 Of wrong by fierce invaders wrought :
 But powers infernal feed the glow,
 The path is sin, the issue woe.
 Deceptive meteors court thy gaze,
 Death lurks within the radiant blaze :—
 As moth, allured by taper's beam,
 Fearless in narrowing circle moves,
 And plunges in the ardent stream,
 A victim to the light he loves.

" Now say, wilt thou convey once more
 Thy comrade to the distant shore,
 If such it be ? My lip could drain
 The sweet and drowsy cup again."
 " Would'st thou confide so far ? confide
 In one whose hand thy blood hath dyed ?"
 " Aye ; wherefore not ? I trust thee well ;
 Bring me the cup : the act shall tell."

Izram arose, but lingered still—

“Albert, I would thy race could reign,
Careering over every hill,

And ruling every fertile plain :
We are too weak, too frail, too few,
To plant our ancient palm anew :
To them I'd ope the secret mine,
And blythe my shadowy throne resign.”
Albert in sadness smiled—“ Alas !

Before thy gold's destructive gleam,
The virtues of our race would pass,
Like frost before the fervid beam :
Look to the neighbouring isles, and scan
The boasted righteousness of man—
These western isles—their very name
Should burn a Briton's cheek with shame—
‘Trust not in man,’ the Lord hath spoke ;
And there, beneath the hideous yoke,
Mid groans and blood on every side,
‘Trust not in man,’ is echoed wide.
Still rolls the yell of agony
Unanswered through the listening sky ;
Nor yet displays requiting time
A scourge for Britain's impious crime ;
Nor heaven-commissioned whirlwinds sweep
That noisome plague to ocean's deep.
But days of reckoning wrath shall come,
To hurl the bolt of vengeance home,
If mercy o'er the billowy sea,
Still vainly pour the warning plea.”
Izram the cup in silence brought
His brow was stamped with solemn thought ;
And Albert said, “ I needs must gain

One boon from thee : when passed the tide,
Wilt thou, like faithful nurse, remain,
Nor yield thy charge to other guide ?”
“ Forsake thee ? no—though limb from limb
Were rent, I would abide by him
Who saved me, doubly saved, and bled”—

“ Enough, my friend — the draught was
sweet :

Now let me pray, ere sense be dead ;
And when in waking hours we meet,
Methinks I shall be strong, and free
To tread the greenwood sward with thee.”

CANTO III.

THERE comes a sound of waters dashing,
A voice from nature's midnight tomb ;
And fast the silvery foam is flashing,
In flakes of light athwart the gloom ;
The vampire bat his circuit wheels,
Gliding amid the thorny brake ;

And where the poisonous gum congeals,
The bloated toad from covert steals,
Rousing the torpid snake.
Nor aloe waves, nor towering palm,
No shrub distils the odorous balm ;
But slimy venoms, trickling slow
From clasping vines, bedew the moss ;
Where aconite and hemlock grow,
And dank festoons, depending low,
The ocotochtli's pathway cross.
No gales of heaven, but vapours damp,
Heavily through the dark trees breathe,
And curling round the sullen swamp,
Their noxious eddies wreathe.
Hurled from a rock's black beetling brow,
The fretful waters spin below :
Deep, deep beneath the trembling ground,
Giddily flies the whirlpool round ;
Nought but the light spray foaming high
Again beholds the cheerful sky ;
Entombed within some caverned cell,
They roar a hollow, stern farewell.

Close on the verge of that buried tide,
With cautious step two figures glide :
Low tones of shuddering horror thrill—
“ This is no haunt for living men ;
Sepulchral damps my spirit chill,
And nature faints, as powers of ill
Presided o'er this murky glen.”
“ Yes, I have led thee where the breath
Of all that moves is fraught with death ;
Where adders thrive, and poisons wave,
And rudely gapes the frowning grave.
When tardy morn shall glimmer here,
I'll show thee wilder forms of fear ;
Aye, show thee in how small a span
May cluster every curse, but man,
The master-curse : now strain thy sight,
Pierce the foul mist, and mark the sky,
A moment see the fitful light
Flashing its blood-red column high :
Volcanic fires : 'tis sweet to gaze
At midnight on their lurid blaze,
And here from sullen slumber rouse
The tribes of death's dark treasure-house.
Thou'lt chide me now”—“ I'll rather weep,
Powerless to heal.”—“ But prompt to soothe,
Thou voice of hope, and soul of truth !
Mark those cold waves with rapid sweep,
In darkness born, to darkness leap,
Yet glimmer as they go, in light
That half illumes this dreary night.
Hurried like them in shrouding gloom,
From rayless birth to joyless doom,
If Izram's soul one moment shine
In its fell course, that gleam is thine.
Yet wherefore link thy fate to one
By Heaven disowned, by man undone ?

Upholding whom thou can'st not save,
Caught in the whirl to share his grave."

" 'Twere but a dastard part to leave
My shipmate when the billows heave
In stormy swell—I cannot fear,
Though man forsake the Lord is near.
Think'st thou Iberian foes can thread
The lab'rinth of our winding tread?"
" Unaided? no—but who may scan
The guileful perfidy of man?
Xloti will loose the prisoned wave,
To deluge yonder island cave,
Stifling the wasps within their nest;

But some perchance have winged their way."
" And could'st thou give such foul behest,
The faithful with the false to slay?"

" No 'heat of mine: from age to age,
Caziques their plighted oath engage,
Ere robber hand or eye profane
Those consecrated wrecks, to drain
The circling lake, and bid the flood
With sweeping gush the caverns brim;
Xloti is born of regal blood,

The stern achievement rests with him,
If such our need: the subject band,
Sworn vassals, bow to my command.
Summoned by me to upper air,
Treason alone durst linger there,
Unconscious of the secret doom
That steals upon her mystic tomb:
The skill to flood that vaulted stone
In Xloti's breast and mine, alone,
Is sealed. Behold yon sickly gleam,
Precursor of the ruddy beam:
Eastward it struggles: slow expires
The radiance of those earth-born fires.
Morn will relume, with callous smile,
The paths of peril, woe, and toil,
Reckless, on many an eye-ball dance,
That sickens at her flaunting glance."

Swathed in a grey mysterious light,
Now shows the rock its frowning height;
Precipitous, wild, rude, and bare,
No softening verdure freshens there.
Deep chasms indent the rugged side,
Each stern black fissure gaping wide;
Projecting crags would fain delay
The cataract in its foaming way,
But fast the broken waters gush,
And to their secret dwelling rush.
As rolls the heavy mist apart,
With transient blink the sun-beams dart,
Where on the tall rock's jagged steep
The swart and yellow lichens creep;
Stirred by the morning's breath, they fall
Like pennons on a ruined wall.
Far westward smiles the ruddy glow,
On mountain summits capped with snow,

That, melting in the distant sky,
Expand a cloudy ridge on high:
But ever glooming shades repel
The day-beam from that sombre dell.
Yet welcome was the rude repose;
A dark retreat from darker foes.

Albert, in slumber wrapped, was borne
Forth from the cave at early morn;
And woke in timely hour, to wrest
A dagger aimed at Izram's breast,
By treach'rous hand: the rebel, bound,
Beneath the weapon's point displayed
The wily snares encircling round

His youthful leader, long betrayed.
Then Xloti came; his lightning thrust
Stretched the assassin mute in dust;
He tempered with resistless plea

The fiery scorn of Izram's soul,
Winning the haughty chief to flee,
Ere the full-freighted cloud should roll
On Albert, that o'erwhelming tide
Which he had braved in dauntless pride.

In hunter's simplest weed arrayed,
Yet deeply armed with tube and blade,
They sallied, where the mock-bird sung
Her sweetest lay, and squirrels sprung
In playful leap: before them glowed
Soft plumage of a thousand dyes,
Where from their flower-enamelled road

Abrupt the floating pinions rise,
And perch amid the deepening green,
In glorious shapes of silver sheen,
Of regal purple, blushing red,
Each tint o'er nature's pallet spread.
Lizards and fangless snakes display
Their agile forms in vestment gay;
The wild-bee, as he wends along,
Trills to the rose his sylvan song;
Twining in lofty arches high,
Blend cedar, palm, and ebony;
Gigantic aloes here unfold

At every joint their knots of gold;
There, the tall tulip-tree bestuds
Her branching arms with gem-like buds;
And not a charm to Flora given
But smiles beneath that azure heaven.
Cereus,—hesperus of flowers,—

Enamoured of the softer hours,
Lies coiled within her downy cell,
In beauty's proudest blaze to swell,
When shoots the fire-fly's fairy gleam;
The sable brow of night to wreath
In fragrance day could never breathe,
Then die before the morning's beam.

In winding course, a crystal rill
Steals from beneath the rising hill,
Freshening a sunny bank, arrayed
In emerald moss and infant blade.

There, like a drift of stainless snow,
 Beaks the white stag, a noble aim ;
 But Izram hath not bent his bow,
 While faintly, indistinct, and low,
 The murmuring accents came.
 " I shorten not thy fleeting span,
 Poor native fool ! thou fear'st not man,
 Because thou know'st him not—'twere his
 With murderous skill to mar thy bliss,
 To dye thy silken vest with blood,
 And speed thee plunging through the wood,
 I cannot now."—From light repose
 Startled, that beauteous creature rose ;
 A moment gazed with wondering eye,
 Bearing his graceful antlers high,
 Then gambolling, in wanton glee,
 Sprung o'er the stream, and turned to flee.
 Peering above his rapid path,
 The monkey tribe his flight survey,
 Chattering declare their idle wrath,
 And shake the bough, and bend the spray ;
 Hurling the juicy missile far,
 In all the rage of mimic war ;
 While parrots stoop, with curious pry,
 The ebon beak and piercing eye,
 Betraying mid their leafy screen,
 Bedropt with gold, a livelier green :
 And rainbow pinions, fluttering round,
 Swell the gay strife with rustling sound.

The closing eve viewed Albert laid
 Beneath a low palmetto's shade,
 Whose feathery branches, wooed to spread
 On canes, afford a verdant shed.
 Izram with leech's care unbound,
 And gently dressed the healing wound.
 Cheerily he spoke, his cheek the while
 Half brightened to a passing smile,
 " Thanks to the Christian's God are due ;
 Our hasty flight thou dost not rue.
 I'll bring thee cooling pulps, and keep
 A soldier's watch, while thou shalt sleep ;
 Then stretch my limbs in turn, and try
 How mates despair with misery."

" Woe, Izram, is a bitter root,
 Yet formed to bear immortal fruit ;
 A harrow in th' Almighty hand,
 To crush and turn the stubborn land.
 The reeds have broke and pierced thy breast,
 Oh make the Rock thy fortress now !
 And thou shalt win a sweeter rest
 Than broods upon the monarch's brow.
 The warning to thy soul is sent,
 These awful scourges cry ' Repent !'
 Bend but a steadfast gaze within,
 Scan the permitted reign of sin,
 List to the righteous law, whose breath
 Guerdons each evil thought with death,

—A conscious death that cannot die,
 The gnawings of eternity,—
 Then on the cross thy Saviour see,
 Bearing the wrath divine for thee,
 And risen with all-prevailing love
 To plead thy desperate cause above ;
 While gently, in thine inmost ear,
 The Spirit's voice invites thee near.
 The foe, to bar that winning sound
 Hemmed thee with lofty bulwarks round ;
 He bade thy fiery passions bring
 Rebellious bands to dare thy King ;
 Ambition, love, revenge, and pride,
 Armed at his beck, a host supplied :
 Entrenched, thy soul disdainful trod,
 Gloried in shame, and scorned its God.
 A Father's hand in pity burst
 Through the black fence of powers accurst ;
 Plucked from the sheltering battlement,
 To cast thee on the stormy wild,
 And there the gracious summons sent
 Again salutes His wayward child ;
 Tells thee, my brother-worm, by me,
 That heaven hath oped before thy tread
 Its golden gates, and Jesus spread
 The banquet of His love for thee."

Still shading his averted face,
 The youth in pensive silence stood ;
 Then starting, with disordered pace,
 Plunged deep within the thickest wood ;
 While, faith o'er-mastering cold despair,
 Albert pursued the theme in prayer.
 When woke the bird her matin song,
 The pilgrims rose to wend along,
 And wilder grew the path, and chill
 The evening breeze from moor and hill ;
 Till midnight vapours, cold and damp,
 Enwrapped them in the pois'nous swamp ;
 Nor might they close the heedful eye
 Beneath its humid canopy.

When to that gloomy scene the ray
 Had lent its scanty share of day,
 Nor longer could the rattlesnake
 Lie veiled within the shadowy brake,
 But the fierce eye-beam sternly told
 Where lay involved his deadly fold,
 And slinking back from human ken
 The she-wolf sought her secret den,
 The weary travellers softly trod
 Over the moist and slimy sod,
 Wary and slow, for still their feet
 Verged on the viper's dank retreat.
 Above, Arachne's giant brood
 Spun their tough venom through the wood,
 So firm, that captive birds in vain
 Essayed to rive the gluey chain :

Clenched in the reptile's closing grasp,
 The helpless victims writhe and gasp,
 And soon beneath its gory fangs,
 Flutter in death's convulsive pang.
 Where the rude cliffs projecting hung,
 Forth in her pride the eagle sprung ;
 And, stooping from her eyrie's height,
 With sable wing obscured the light :
 Loud thrilled her scream—with louder cry
 Grates from beneath a harsh reply ;
 And there, upon his liquid throne,
 The alligator reigns alone ;
 With reedy banner wide unfurled,
 Dread monarch of the watery world !
 Clashing his naked fangs, he rears
 His scaly bulk, and spouts the wave ;
 Beneath his glowing eye appears
 The semblance of a sulph'rous grave ;
 So smokes each fiery breath he draws
 In eddies through those iron jaws :
 Basking in shoals the monsters lie,
 Or plough the lake with deafening cry.

The scenery of that murky vale
 Might teach the firmest heart to quail ;
 Yet faltered not their steps, who wound
 Skirting the cloudy waters round ;
 For Albert, strong in faith, recalled
 The fiat which to man enthralled
 All nature's various tribes, and spread
 On every beast his fear and dread.
 What daunts him whom the Lord defends,
 Numbering his every hair, and bends
 The shadow of His hand, to raise
 A bulwark round His servant's ways ?
 And Izram's pallid features wear
 The reckless smile of bold despair,
 As glancing on the living tide
 The fierce unwieldy forms he eyed,
 And muttered, " Ye are freemen still :
 Stout were the arm, and shrewd the skill,
 That dared your native reign invade,
 Or touch the ivory palisade
 Fencing your throats, though every fold,
 And every scale, were lined with gold."

Retiring from the sedgy lake,
 A steeply winding path they take,
 Toiling to gain a narrow ledge,
 Where mountain goat would pause to tread,
 So giddily the broken edge
 O'erhung a gulf's unbottomed bed.
 But firm and fearless Izram stepped,
 Guiding his comrade's course, and crept
 Within a chasm, whose narrow span
 Could ill admit the bulk of man ;
 Meet portal to an eagle's nest,
 But strange resort for human guest.

Descending now, with cautious leap,
 They stood beneath an ample cave,
 Whose frequent crevice, straight and deep,
 Free passage to the sunbeam gave.
 " Here rest we, Albert ; here abide,
 Till fairer chance our steps betide.
 These rocky vaults may well supply
 A dwelling lightsome, warm, and dry ;
 Though foes our wild retreat should ken,
 No hostile step can near the den ;
 A single arm may guard the post,
 Nor fail to daunt a threatenful host.
 The palm's broad leaf, profusely thrown,
 Shall soften e'en a couch of stone ;
 And, westward, robed in cheerful green,
 Thou seest an ample magazine
 Of fuel, game, and wholesome root ;
 Sweet bev'rage, and delicious fruit :
 Peer through the narrow chink, and say,
 How lik'st thou yonder fair display ?"

It was a magic scene ; the eye
 Gazed from a cliff abrupt and high :
 Below, a velvet plain was spread,
 Where buffalo and roe-buck fed ;
 Beyond, a spicy forest rose,
 And calmly flowed a limpid stream,
 While far remote, in deep repose,
 Gigantic mountains caught the beam,
 Their summits wrapped in snowy shroud,
 Towering above the fleecy cloud.
 With sparkling eye and bounding breast,
 Albert exclaimed, " Be this our rest !
 Here, in this sweet secluded cell,
 The Lord may smile, and peace shall dwell."

From short repast, and light repose,
 Ere stooped the western sun, they rose,
 And to their lofty eyrie bore,
 With patient toil, the evening store.
 Again at early morn they rove
 The sloping plain and shady grove,
 Bear in the cocoa's ample shell
 Streams that from crystal fountains well ;
 Izram with nice discernment taps
 The balmy tree for luscious saps ;
 The magney, vegetable mine,
 Yields them her sweet cassavi bread,
 Pours from her veins the gen'rous wine,
 Curtains the wall and strews the bed ;
 The gaze enchants, the need supplies,
 Weeps nectar, breathes perfume, and dies
 Where verdant scales reflect the beam,
 Lurks cherrimoya's honied cream ;
 And every sweet that nature gave,
 Lay hoarded in that craggy cave.
 Oft as the hunter's craft they plied,
 Beneath their bow the quarry died ;

And memory would her cells explore,
 For touching theme, and classic lore.
 But lore nor sylvan sport control
 The deepening gloom of Izram's soul ;
 Though Albert wrought with sacred skill
 The burden from his mind to win,
 And oft repulsed, unwearied still,
 Would probe the festering wound within.

Izram had stripped from feathered prey
 Their plumes of azure, gold and jet,
 And listless as at eve he lay,
 Entwined a native coronet ;
 Gazed for a while with musing eye,
 And flung the beauteous bauble by.
 Albert with silent heed beheld
 The smothered pang that wildly swelled ;
 Then spoke, in accent sad and low,
 " Would it were mine to soothe thy woe !
 There heaves within that aching breast
 A stormy sea that cannot rest ;
 Nor will its wearying tempest cease,
 Till thou shalt list the word of peace."

" Never ! no word of peace can come
 Within my spirit's darkened home.
 I chide thee not, for well I know
 From purest love thy teachings flow ;
 The heavenly theme to thee is dear,
 To me 'tis bitterness and fear ;
 So lost am I, the widest grace
 Could never Izram's soul embrace."

" Strange, that a honey-drop should fall
 On thy distempered lip as gall !
 Canst thou, a worm, a finite thing,
 Outreach the grace of heaven's high King ?
 I know thy spirit fierce and wild,
 I know thy hand by blood defiled,
 By headlong passions hurried still
 To work each demon's deadly will ;
 I know it all : and yet thine eye
 Lours with unuttered mystery :
 Deep in thy bosom's inmost fold
 There lurks some secret, yet untold."
 " A serpent nest : I will not show
 That gorgon to thy shrinking view.
 Go, search through flame, through earth's firm
 core,
 Through depths of ocean, heights of air,
 The everlasting gulf explore,
 Thou canst not with one wrath-drop more
 Crown the full cup of my despair,
 Nor compass with thy labouring thought
 The crimes this fearless heart hath wrought."
 " Thy words appal me not ; I bring
 The proffer of a healing spring ;
 Some lost as thee have blest the flood,
 Cleansed from all sin by Jesus' blood.

Canst thou Jehovah's word recal,
 Or pass beyond that boundless ALL ?
 Though lightnings pierce, and thunders roll,
 And mountain billows whelm thy soul,
 Though round thee earth her barriers spread,
 And ocean weeds enwrap thy head,
 Lulled by His voice, the storm shall cease,
 His gentle accents whisper, peace."

On Izram's sullen glance was borne
 A dart of anguish, blent with scorn :
 It curled his lip of livid hue :—
 " And blooms there peace for Judas too ?
 To his own place he went—repair
 With tidings of deliverance there :
 There, in thy fond security,
 Preach peace to him—but none to me :
 Me, the apostate ; me, who sold
 The faith, but not for earth-born gold ;
 A deeper barter, paid too well
 In the devouring coin of hell.
 —I marvel at thy steadfast brow,—
 Its sudden flush hath passed away—
 I tell thee I was blest as thou,
 Beneath the gospel ray :
 Not clouded with the pagan rite
 Of those whose fairest noon is night,
 But pure and holy as the blaze,
 When first, to the Redeemer's praise,
 On Bethlehem's plain the song began,
 While seraphs hymned, in rapturous lays,
 Glory to God, and peace to man.
 The name of Jesus once could calm
 Each stormy fiend that racked my breast,
 Breathe o'er my soul ambrosial balm,
 And bathe my brow in holiest raiment.
 Oh ! many a day I taught His name
 To lisping childhood, faltering old ;
 And prayer arose like hallowed flame,
 And lays of sweet devotion swelled,
 —I spurned Him—Foolish youth forbear ;
 Thou shalt not weep, or not for me ;
 It maddens more my wild despair,
 Those kindly-trickling drops to see.
 Still flow they ? would thou hadst not wrung
 This secret from my blistering tongue !
 Check, womanish, thy tears, for shame—
 Or weep ; for thou hast wakened mine :
 I little thought the withering flame
 Could mingle thus with liquid brine—
 I little thought a tear should stain
 This crime-emboldened cheek again."
 He flung him on his leafy bed,
 With arms enfolded o'er his head,
 And Albert inly joyed to view
 The softening and unwonted dew.
 Whispering he spoke—" I half had guessed
 The secret of my brother's breast,

But could not deem thy land was graced
 With gospel glories undebased.
 Poor prodigal! thy spirit rouse,
 Come to thy Father's open house:
 He longs for thee: behold, His care
 The ring, the robe, the feast prepare.
 Izram—my friend—return, and prove,
 The sweets of everlasting love."
 "Thou hast a syren note—I long,
 Yet dread to list that witching song
 Of pardon and of hope. Now hear
 My tale of sorrow, shame, and fear:
 Afar I fling the dark disguise,
 And give the monster to thine eyes.

"Marauding o'er the boundless waves,
 Wandered a band of pirate slaves;
 Spain from her dungeons poured the crew,
 To fill the widening gaps anew;
 For, crushed and blighted, day by day,
 Our native millions pined away;
 And Heaven the plenteous cup of wrath
 Poured freely on the murderers' path,
 Bidding their wasted hoets expire,
 In famine, surfeit, flood, and fire.
 Long ere the western shore they gain,
 This felon freight rebellious rose,
 The galley seized, and roved the main,
 Plunder their word, the world their foes.
 A vessel crossed the robbers' way,
 They chased and grasped the helpless prey.

"There sighed, amid the captive band,
 A wanderer from the clime of Tell,
 Hills of the Switzer, glorious land,
 Where freedom's wildest carols swell,
 While on the Alp's majestic brow
 She wreathes her diadem of snow.
 Spurning the chain that sought to bind
 His spotless faith, his lofty mind,
 The noble exile, high in birth,
 Ennobled more by priceless worth,
 His home forsook, and fondly smiled
 Upon his only, beauteous, child,
 Deeming in other climes to meet
 A calmer rest for Minna's feet.
 Ere yet the work of plunder ceased,
 The billows roared, the gale increased,
 And, dashed upon our northern coast,
 The corsair crew their galley lost;
 'Scaping with life, a naked band,
 The weary remnant reached the land.

"Near those wild waters dwelt a tribe,
 Whom force nor quelled nor gift could bribe;
 Famed like their sires for bold emprise,
 The stern and tameless Otomies:
 Unfettered in their mountain reign,
 Their battle-cry was—'Woe to Spain!'

And those dark pirates 'scaped the flood
 To sate the vengeful soil with blood.
 Amid the pile of slaughter flung,
 The Switzer died; but Minna clung,
 Frantic with fear, to one who spread
 His target o'er her cowering head,
 And with a chief's control repressed
 The rage of many a stormy breast.
 Borne to his rocky home, she dwelt,
 Honoured and blest, that warrior's bride,
 And bade his rugged nature melt
 To gentler sympathies allied.
 Wound in the soft and silken tie
 Of woman's hallowed witchery,
 —The spell that sternest bosom moves—
 He loved as savage rarely loves.

"She bore a daughter; one whose face
 Bespoke the father's tawny race;
 But oh, the pearls that dwelt within
 That soul of Minna's gentle kin!
 The heart of love, capacious mind;
 The feelings generous, soft, refined;
 The lamp of piety, that glowed
 So brightly in its sweet abode!
 My mother!"—and the accents gasped,
 Half stifled by the sobs that rise,
 While on his burning temples clasped,
 His hands conceal his streaming eyes:—
 "Oh mother, mother! friend and guide,
 Why left the parricide thy side!

"That bud of beauty scarce was blown,
 When Minna sought her Saviour's throne.
 Reft of his love the widowed chief
 His tribe forsook in restless grief;
 From place to place the pilgrims roam,
 And reach at length Chiapa's plain;
 Where, in my father's peaceful home,
 A welcome and repose they gain.
 His generous soul with pain surveyed
 The dying sire, and loved the maid;
 Unknown, save to himself, the race;
 A mixture had been deemed disgrace
 Iberian taint perchance surmised;—
 My noble sire the doubt despised:
 Eagles with eagle mates may wed,
 Though in a distant mountain bred;
 And Alpine eagles soar as high
 As liberty can glance her eye.
 If love of freedom, patriot scorn,
 Blent with the vital stream be borne
 From age to age, that stern disdain
 Full well might bound in Izram's vein.
 My infant ear hath drank the tale
 Of frozen height, and sunny vale,
 Where hearts who spurned oppression's pride
 In living phalanx stemmed the tide,

And fiercely dashed the surging foam
 Back to the startled tyrant's home ;
 Or, battling for the gospel word,
 Pursued the flash of Zuïng's sword.
 Huitzla taught my heart to swell,
 When lisped my tongue the name of Tell ;
 My sire whose blood its current drew
 From high Tezenco's regal race,
 Oft to my spirit's eager view,
 With rival touch, a scene would trace
 Of native glories, meet to flame
 Beside Helvetia's proudest name.
 —They fanned a blaze with playful breath
 To wrap that mingled line in death.

“ Hast thou ne'er marked, my lip and cheek
 No Indian ancestry bespeak ?
 'Twas Minna stamped my brow too fair,
 And softened to its curl my hair :
 Oft while these locks profusely spread,
 My parents stroked the urchin's head,
 And cried with looks of laughing love,
 Their Izram would a tell-tale prove.
 O days of childhood, sweet ye shone ;
 Why died I not ere ye were gone !

“ When ten short circling years were fled,
 We saw Nopatzlin droop and fade ;
 Weeping we kneeled around the bed,
 Where the expiring saint was laid :
 Won to receive the living word,
 Leng had he loved and served the Lord.
 Through the dim shadowy vale of death,
 His God a lamp and staff supplied ;
 And lauding him with feeble breath,
 Joyous in conquering faith he died.
 His was the mild untroubled breast,
 In its own cloudless sunshine blest ;
 Like meadow rill that calmly glides
 Beyond the reign of changeeful tides.
 Mine was the mountain spring, that, led
 Meandering through its rocky bed,
 Waits but a sullen swell to sweep
 With headlong fury down the steep.

“ On rainbow wings the seasons flew ;
 I rose beneath a mother's eye,
 Answering his beam, with mirror true,
 As the still lake reflects the sky ;
 Resplendent in a borrowed light ;
 As yet unruffled, pure, and bright ;
 That was my day of life—the rest
 Is midnight in my stormy breast.
 My boyish gaze would oft explore
 The symbols of our ancient lore,
 And nobles marked their young Cazique,
 As, bending o'er the mystic scroll,
 With starting tear, and burning cheek,
 The rising vengeance swelled my soul ;

And subtly worked the specious leaven,
 Till earth had wiled my heart from heaven.
 Huitzla saw how, many a day,
 From her fond side I stole away,
 Breathing my soul in secret vows,
 And blazing at my country's wrong,
 Mingled with men who loved to rouse
 The latent spark by tale and song ;
 Even while I conned the holy word,
 My spirit pined for Gideon's sword,
 Languished to rend the groaning prey,
 From worse than Egypt's tyrant sway :
 Still on my lip persuasion hung,
 To shame the old and fire the young ;
 Deeply we quaffed the daring theme,
 And revelled in a glorious dream.

“ I told thee how Anselmo sought
 With serpent wile, our peaceful vale ;
 But spare my soul the maddening thought,
 The horrors of the tale !
 When at my feet Huitzla lay,
 And rising placed in dark array
 The apostate's crime and doom,
 Showing the awful paths that lead
 Through evil wish to sinful deed,
 Thence to a hopeless tomb ;
 She warned me of the snare, the stain,
 She pointed to her widowed bower,
 The scene of many a tranquil hour,
 But never more to smile—in vain :
 I wavered, but ambition spoke,
 Drowned was the plaintive plea—I broke
 Impetuous from her wild embrace ;
 Flung far the Saviour's gentle yoke,
 And joined the demon race.

With snares beset, by sin subdued—
 My heart grows sick, I cannot tell
 How, step by step, my foot pursued
 The beaten path that leads to hell ;
 How leisurely the tempter stole,
 Unnoticed, from my heedless soul,
 Her treasure of celestial joys,
 And filled the chasm with airy toys.
 In panoply of pride secure,
 Well could I spurn the sensual lure ;
 Abashed before my scornful eye,
 Vice veiled her foul deformity :
 'Twas in my bosom triumphed sin,
 A saint without, a fiend within,
 While still, in darkening thought, I sate
 My wild revenge, and heath'nish hate.
 And when the Lord, with warning breath,
 Whispered to shun eternal death,
 I turned me from the voice, to prove
 That feverish dream of mortal love.
 Quenched by my fierce and stubborn will,
 Opposed and grieved, the Spirit flies,

And leaves the bartered slave of ill
 To perish in his own device.
 Though Satan urged a rightful claim,
 Fain had I borne the Christian's name,
 To soothe my soul ; but I was pent
 Amid the cowed crew, who bent
 A jealous gaze—I could not guile
 My reason with the flimsy wile
 Of fabling Rome. Anselmo's eye
 Was veiled in prudent policy ;
 He deemed that in the lonely hour
 I bowed before some idol power,
 And questioned not : his pedant store
 Was swelled with tomes of guileful lore,
 And these I rified, day by day,
 Forgot to fear, and ceased to pray.
 While thus I fed the widening blot
 Of hate and passion, scorn and pride,
 Neglected in her lonely cot,
 My mother wept, and pined, and died.
 Then earth and heaven arose to plead
 For vengeance on the parricide ;
 Red came the death-bolt's searching glare,
 Conscience awakened roused despair,
 Writhing I rather raged than mourned,
 My heart in fierce resentment burned ;
 And then the maddening cup I quaffed,
 For Lethe lurked within the draught.
 Spurning against the chastening rod,
 I chose my country for a god,
 Pledged the wild oath, no other name,
 My zeal should move, my care should claim.
 I asked but vengeance, let it come
 From angel's bower or demon's home—
 Who gave revenge should bear away
 My spirit his affianced prey ;
 Anselmo's murder sealed the vow,—
 And darest thou speak of mercy now ?”

“ Mercy, that overtops the height
 Of yonder vaulted azure light :
 Mercy, that sets the hated sin
 Far from the soul as east from west,
 And leads the guilty wanderer in,
 A pardoned and admitted guest :
 That saving power thou hast not known,
 Unbroken was the heart of stone ;
 Unmeet the glorious work to scan,
 Thy teacher was not God but man.
 Soon as arose the troublous swell,
 Thy sand-built shed in ruins fell.
 Far from the Lord thy step hath strayed ;
 Thou hast rebelled, blasphemed, denied
 Thy Saviour King, but he hath prayed,
 And for the foul offender died.”
 “ Oh, not for me !”—“ Nay, do not spurn
 His grace—Who sent me o'er the main,
 To bid thee live, to bid thee turn,
 To save thee from a darker stain,

And armed me with a secret power
 To quell thee in thy wildest hour ?”
 “ 'Tis wondrous : oft, when thou hast spoke,
 Gleams of unearthly radiance broke
 Across my spirit's gloomy night ;
 Glimmers of faint and distant light,
 To show th' appalling chaos there,
 And fade again in black despair.
 Like drowning wretch, with desperate twine,
 Long have I linked my heart to thine ;
 Still brooding o'er the coming day,
 When thou wilt soar to bliss divine,
 And I must sink, the demon's prey.
 'Twas that on thy mild spirit shone,
 The light of days for ever gone ;
 To me thou wert an airy voice,
 A phantom shape, of buried joys,
 Too holy and too pure to rest
 Again in this polluted breast.
 Yet stout rebellion linked with pride,
 The tie disowned, the claim denied.
 Deep in the iron net ensnared,
 I fain would deem our common wrong
 My life preserved, and peril shared,
 Had wove a chain so bright and strong.
 And while my soul, o'erawed by thine,
 Faltered in every fell design,
 Still writhing in th' accursed yoke,
 What pangs thy faithful speech awoke !
 Nor wine could drown, nor madness quell,
 That foretaste of my future hell.”
 “ Blessed be the Lord, whose watchful care,
 Hath laid thy festering bosom bare !
 He never made a vain appeal,
 Nor searched a wound He would not heal.
 The stroke is mercy ; lie thou still
 Beneath His hand, and wait His will.
 Pray—He will send the quickening shower ;
 Believe—and thou shalt know His power.”
 “ I may not pray ; I would not bow
 My pride, and He hath left me now.
 Too long I waged the frantic strife—
 What murderer holds eternal life ?”
 “ As murderer none : but God can lave
 To fleecy white that crimson glow,
 And scarlet from the blanching wave
 Emerges pure as drifted snow :
 Be thou of sinners first and chief,
 Thy darkest crime were unbelief.”

To nurse the budding hope, to calm
 The stormy throb, and drop the balm
 Of promise on the smarting wound,
 Was patient Albert's daily care ;
 And angel guards encamping round,
 The heaven-taught labour share.
 Exulting fiends, whose eager eyes
 Long glared upon their passive prize,

Repulsed by that celestial band,
 In foaming rage expectant stand,
 And firmly grasp the loosening chain :—
 Speed to your dens, ye race accursed ;
 The Lord hath spoke, the fetters burst.
 Your victim lives again :
 And o'er the shattered links of hell
 Seraphic tones triumphant swell.

The youths had plied their woodland skill
 In winding dell and slanting hill ;
 And now, beneath the forest shade,
 While brightly glowed the western sky,
 Izram the beauteous scene surveyed,
 With placid smile and dewy eye.
 " Mark how the dazzling glories rest
 On Andes' steep and frozen brow ;
 Ev'n thus upon my sterner breast,
 Albert the ray is beaming now.
 That word of comfort haunts me still,
 ' Lord, if thou wilt thou canst'—' I WILL.'
 Though measureless the leprous taint,
 Though faith be weak, and hope be faint,
 He can—He will—Let rocks remove,
 And yonder mountains melt in clay,
 The promise of redeeming love,
 Shall never, never pass away.
 In vain my prostrate soul would trace
 This miracle of boundless grace ;
 But Thou who bid'st that soul believe,
 Jesus, thy ransomed foe receive !
 Here, in this heart of yielding stone,
 Engrave thy law, and fix thy throne."

A joy too full for speech or thought
 In Albert's swelling bosom wrought—
 Know'st thou the joy of him, whose breath
 With pleadings faith alone can give,
 Hath won a soul from ways of death,
 To seek the narrow path and live ?
 Hapless and strange thy doubtful lot,
 O Christian ! if thou know'st it not ;
 While sinners throng thy daily road,
 And death's rude billow, rolling deep,
 Down to perdition's fell abode
 Bears them with hourly sweep.
 Hast thou ne'er led a pondering eye
 To that dread word, ETERNITY ?
 Hath ne'er thy lip essayed to tell
 The saving strength of Jesus' name,
 Nor questioned if a soul could dwell
 In whirlpools of devouring flame ?
 Go mark the stately bird, betrayed
 To scoffing foes ; her idiot head
 Shrouded within the narrow shade,
 She hears the hunters' threatening tread,
 Yet deems her spreading bulk unseen,
 If but a leaf her vision screen,

Nor shrinks while busy hands prepare
 The piercing dart, or coiling snare.
 Impressive type of fools, who close
 The mental eye in false repose ;
 And, starting, wake to writhe in vain,
 Bound in an everlasting chain.

CANTO IV.

SWEET was the morning's tint that gave
 Its first blush to the rugged cave ;
 Sweet was the quivering beam that glowed,
 Tempered by deep, o'erarching shades,
 Along the hunters' noon-day road,
 Winding amid the flowery glades ;
 And sweet the parting ray that fell
 Lengthening within their simple cell.
 Where'er they rove, where'er they rest,
 Hovers unseen the stainless dove,
 And faith in either tranquil breast
 Feeds the pure flame of hope and love.
 Brightly through life's dark vista given,
 Shone on their view the courts of heaven ;
 While day by day the brothers share
 Inspiring converse, praise, and prayer—
 Balm of the weary pilgrim's woe,
 Dawn of celestial bliss below,
 When, darkling yet awakened, man
 Ponders redemption's glorious plan,
 And to a kindred heart makes known
 The labouring thought that swells his own,
 Of mercies countless, measureless,
 Immortal as the soul they bless !
 But thorns bestrew the path divine,
 And sevenfold flames the gold refine ;
 Sealed is the heir with scourging love,
 Chastened below to reign above.

There came a note at even-tide
 Of trampling hoofs that swiftly trod ;
 For, herding close, the wild deer hied
 Impetuous o'er the dewy sod.
 Roused from their nests, the eagles go,
 With scream of menace floating low,
 And summon many a wing to rise
 Fluttering beneath the darkened skies.
 Izram hath quenched the flaming torch
 And fixed within the narrow porch
 A ponderous stone—through slender chink
 The crescent shoots her feeble blink,
 While slow her infant glories die,
 Remotely in the western sky.
 Sinks the harsh sound, the tumults cease,
 Night's gentle brow is wrapped in peace ;

And Albert speaks—"Some beast of prey
Holds through the woods unwonted way."
"No step but man's would waken here
Such clamorous notes of rage and fear:
Ambushed perchance in yonder glen,
The foe hath marked this secret den,
And scans, beneath the glooming night,
Our fortress in the rocky height."
"What counsel then?"—"With augur's care
Observe each wing that cleaves the air;
Note if the timid herd shall trace
Their wonted path with heedless pace;
Till then, within our watch-tower pent,
Lurk we secure, and bide th' event.
Our ample hoard"—with whizzing sound
An arrow passed, and smote the ground
Joyous he seized the shaft; "How true,
Ev'n through the shade, thy greeting flew,
Brave Xloti! O for dawning light,
To give this hieroglyph to sight!
Cheer thee, my friend: the Lord hath set
A guard above the tanging net."
"What meanest thou?"—"On this headless dart
Xloti hath graved, with native art,
Some warning word of treacherous foe
Embosomed in the vale below:
Else had his step securely trod
The inlet of our wild abode.
The Lord, this bold device who blest,
Will guard the hours of needful rest:
Undoubting on thy couch recline;
Peace to thy soul, and grace to mine!"

Soft rose the morning's welcome rays,
That gave the shaft to Izram's gaze.
With swelling heart the lines he eyed—
"Gone are the wrecks of Aztlan's pride!
And many a perjured spirit gone
Unsheltered to the judgment throne.
Not mine the deed; but oh, how well,
How long I wrought the craft of hell!
How full thy ravening flame I fed,
Unhallowed wrath! and lured the tread
Of brother men, to wander far
Beneath ambition's baleful star.
Rebellion! 'twas the crime that hurled
Seraphs from bliss, and wrecked the world.
The tyrant chain, the iron rod,
Commissioned scourges, sent of God,
Proclaim, 'Repent!' but I have wrung
To blasphemy that awful word,
Translating to a demon tongue
The message of the Lord."
In silent agony he strode,
Crossed and re-crossed the dim abode,
Smote his damp brow, and pausing stood—
"How deep the thrilling voice of blood?
Unmarked 'mid passion's maddening swell,
How sternly rolls the ruthless knell

O'er the still spirit, pealing slow
Its fiat of eternal woe!"

"A louder plea, resounding high
Through mercy's portals, drowns the cry:
Gushed on the cross a richer vein,
To blot the record, purge the stain:
By faith descried, received in prayer,
Confess thy costly ransom there
He bore thy sin, and who shall roll
That burden back upon thy soul?
Resplendent Sun of righteousness,
Omnipotent to save and bless,
Mistrustful earth a while may shroud
Her vision in her own dark cloud,
But far above our wayward skill,
Beacon of hope! thou shinest still.
That glorious orb is blazing yet,
It will not wane, it cannot set."

Izram, with calm but saddened look
Again the pictured greeting took:
It told of Spanish bands, who, taught
By Nepuel's tale, the cavern sought;
But Xloti, undiscovered, sped
The billows to its secret bed:
In torturing pangs the traitor died,
Beneath the rage of baffled pride,
That judged his fabling lip had told
A dream, to mock their thirst of gold.
But some unhappy clue he gave
Had led them to this mountain cave,
Where, as they deemed, an ample band
Was marshalled under Izram's hand.
Less would the cautious foemen dare
By open force than secret snare;
And Xloti warned, "Whene'er I fly
A purple shaft, the storm is nigh."

Wheeling their round unbroken flight,
Glide the fair day, and tranquil night;
Far distant roamed the peaceful deer,
The jealous eagle hovered near,
Guarding her brood: within the cell
Watched the alternate sentinel,
Piled close the stony fence, and bent
The ear, in silent heed intent;
Waiting a sovereign master's will,
In deep submission, calm and still.
A second week had scantily passed,
The evening beam, with kind farewell,
A lingering line of glory cast
Athwart the captive's leagured cell;
They gazed upon the mellowing glow
That deepened in the blushing sky;
When murmuring from the plain below,
Arose a melting melody.
Slowly across the velvet sod
A form of female beauty trod;

She shone in soft majestic grace,
 Like maiden of Iberian race ;
 Sparkled beneath the filmy veil
 A dazzling eye ; her cheek was pale,
 Till Albert's meeting glance revealed
 Their secret stand ; then, blushing red
 Her bending features half concealed,
 Her hand upon the lute she spread.
 The Briton turned an anxious eye
 On Izram : flushing quick and high,
 Crimsoned his very brow ; his breath
 Gasp'd as beneath the arm of death :
 Shuddering, an upward look he gave,
 Then paced with faltering step the cave ;
 While richly o'er the plain beneath
 The notes their deep enchantment breathe,
 And mock-birds from the quivering spray
 With mimic cadence swelled the lay,
 That called the youth's light tread to press
 The flowery woodland's soft recess,—
 " While bears the vestal queen of night
 Her lamp through heaven's triumphal arch,
 And glittering guards, in armour bright,
 Observant trace their sovereign's march,
 And silence walks the shadowy groves,
 And mute is every sigh but love's ;
 Whose stealing footstep will not wake
 A rustle o'er the hum-bird's nest,
 Nor fright, amid the spangled brake,
 The firefly from his leafy rest."

'Twas nature's lullaby ; the note
 Scarce o'er a murmuring whisper rose ;
 Dubious a while it seemed to float,
 Then faltered to a dying close :
 And soft o'er Izram's melting soul
 With wonted spell the witchery stole,
 As, pausing on his breathless tread,
 Drooped the long lash, and bending head.
 But starting soon in conscious shame,
 Brightly the mantling crimson came,
 And flashed his eye, while glancing round
 Firmly he paced the cavern's bound.
 " Hear'st thou the lay ? a goodly net
 For truant wing by fowler set !
 That syren tone hath bade me break
 Through iron fence, and stormy lake,
 Through filial love, and faith divine,
 All but the idol's fatal shrine,
 My country's cause—How wildly soft
 The liquid poison steals aloft—
 Bane of my soul ! and dare it come
 Polluting thus our hallowed home ?
 Again the wildering accents swell—
 Speak, Albert ; burst the tempter's spell ;
 I may not list—a thousand ties
 Press on my heart—O Lord, arise !
 Arm me with strengthening grace within,
 Pierce me with every shaft but sin !"

" There spoke the Christian . faith and prayer
 Can crush satanic links in air.
 The strain has paused"—" No more 'twill float,
 I know the last long closing note.
 The songstress lingers yet—I'll try
 To shame her hence." Then firm and high
 He spoke, with cool, deliberate word—
 " Leila, where lurks thy wedded lord ?
 Plies he the huntsman's craft, to win
 The quarry with so stale a gin ?
 And thou, combined with evil men,
 Darest thou explore yon fearful glen,
 Dreadless of Him, whose righteous breath
 Can quench th' unhallowed wile in death ?"
 " Izram, thy Leila comes"—" Away !
 Hath woman shame so light a sway ?
 Pure as the wreath on Andes' brow
 I thought thee once, or never vow
 Had linked my soul to thee—'twas thine
 To rend the chain, and be it mine
 To warn thee that a gulf of woo
 Flames for the faithless wife below.
 Hast to thy spouse, nor longer roam,
 Unseemly, from a matron home."
 " I came to save thee, not to snare"—
 " Thanks, lady, for thy generous care,
 Needless but kind"—abrupt he left
 The winning voice, and dangerous cleft ;
 Yet sad remembrance wrings his breast,
 And troublous visions break his rest,
 Till morning's opening eye revealed
 His lids in heavy slumber sealed.

To veil the brightening beams, that streak
 His pallid brow and sunken cheek,
 Albert approached the chink ; amaze
 And horror fixed his silent gaze ;
 For, lifeless on the dewy turf,
 Young Leila lay beneath the cave,
 As lies a mound of silvery surf
 Upon the green sea wave.
 Their shadowy veil the tresses throw
 Profusely o'er the arm of snow
 That props her head ; the other pressed
 Her lute beneath the folding vest,
 Clasp'd it, as her fondest care
 In death itself had centered there.
 Aroused by Izram's waking sigh,
 Albert withdrew his glistening eye,
 Bent o'er the youth, and strove to guile
 His watchful heed with wonted smile,
 Pressing the hand whose feverish glow
 Betrayed the recent work of woe.
 " How far the stealing rays have crept,
 While heavily the sluggard slept !
 The night was drear—an evil guest
 Was lurking in my gloomy breast,
 Impatience—little known to thee ;
 Comrade of crime and misery

When Heaven its secret fire applies,
 How thick the latent scum will rise!
 How fiercely doth deceptive sin
 Contest her ancient throne within!
 Now, wearied in the bitter fray,
 My spirit longs to soar away;
 Deep festering in my faithless heart,
 Rankles temptation's fiery dart.
 Though dimmed the gold with vilest dross,
 I shun the furnace, dread the cross;
 Albert, hast thou no word of cheer?
 Thy lid hath crushed a rising tear.
 That note, perchance, of yestereve,
 Wakened some chord"—"For thee I grieve;
 The cup with sorrow brimmed, and shed
 In chastening wisdom on thy head;
 But He will arm thee yet"—in haste
 Izram the rocky cavern paced,
 And viewed the scene—his placid air
 Wore the still calm of mute despair,
 Nor query drew, nor pleadings wrung
 One accent from his freezing tongue.
 Lost in the very trance of woe,
 No sigh could heave, no drop could flow,
 Till roused by Albert's arm, who sought
 To force him from the blighting spot,
 He muttered low, "She came to save—
 I doomed her to a cold still grave;
 Dark, dark and hopeless—thou art fled—
 Leila, thy very soul is dead.
 Albert, forbear; thou canst not move—
 Seest thou the lute, my gift of love?
 True, to thy latest gasp,—I know
 Thy wedded life was double woe.—
 Spurned from my home, the night-cloud wept
 Her dew upon thy dying head;
 Across thy cheek the glow-worm crept,
 The hovering bat his pinion spread,
 And fanned away thy parting sigh,
 While slept thy fell destroyer nigh,
 In hateful ease."—A youthful deer
 Spurned the light turf, and gambol'd near;
 Starting he cried, "Thou shalt not stay,
 To glut the ravening bird of prey!"
 Seizing his woodland garb, he tore
 The barrier from their narrow door—
 "Albert, forgive! I cannot brook
 The language of thy pleading look;
 Guard thou the cell"—"And let thee stray
 Unaided on thy desperate road?
 While foes beset thy prayerless way,
 Faith slumbers, headlong passions goad,
 And this perchance some crafty gin
 To close thy wild career in sin."
 Reclining on the loosened stone,
 The sufferer heaves a bitter groan:
 "Inhuman! wouldst thou leave her there,
 For bird to peck, and beast to tear?"

"We may not—'twere a hateful deed
 To spurn a dying sinner's need;
 For life may linger yet, or guile
 May deeply weave a subtle wile.
 Bid thy tumultuous thoughts subside,
 Look to the Lord, our shield and guide;
 Though sharp the flame, His tender care
 Rules the refining process there."
 "Thy meekness never chides—this vein
 Is bursting now with frenzied pain:
 All may be well; but bide thou near,
 Nought but my treacherous self I fear:
 Descend we swiftly"—"Forward press,
 For duty calls, and Heaven will bless."
 The cataract, in its wildest chase,
 Might scarce outstrip their downward pace,
 And Albert's hand hath lifted slow
 The tress from Leila's cheek of snow.
 In smothered tone he breathed, "Beware,
 No seal of death is graven there;
 The dews impart a humid chill,
 But conscious life is bounding still:
 Mark how the faint suffusions creep;—
 No semblance here of trance or sleep."
 Vainly he spoke—the fatal spell
 Had wrought its treacherous bidding well:
 Wreathed in its toils, the youth had stood,
 Though echoing thunders cleft the wood,
 Reckless of all. "Now, darest thou say
 Life lingers in that beauteous clay?
 The eye is dim, the lip is mute,
 Or Izram's plaint had Leila woke;
 All silent, as the sleeping lute,
 Where love and music spoke.
 Back! bar me not—can peril's breath
 Lurk on the frozen lip of death?
 Deep in the cave we'll dig her tomb,
 And strew with softest flowers the bed:—
 Welcome the sternly righteous doom,
 The wrath-shower on my guilty head?
 So calm I'll be"—"Thou wilt not read
 This cozening gear with Christian heed:
 Nought moves thee, save the pleading guest
 Coiled in thine own deluded breast."
 "I tell thee, if the curdling blood
 But crept with nature's faintest flow,
 My voice would bid the mantling flood
 On that soft cheek in crimson glow.
 Foul wrong thy slanderous tongue hath thrown
 Scorning the truth thou ne'er hast known."

"Such truth were crime: a seraph's guise
 May veil the fraudulent prince of lies,
 And couched beneath some specious name
 Unhallowed passions darkly flame;
 Sin's poisoned chalice crowned with flowers
 That bloom and breathe of Eden's bowers:

But death is ambushed—came the song
 Pure from the modest lip of truth,
 To bid thy shrinking soul prolong
 The visioned theme of erring youth,
 Renewed in guilt?—Betrayed to roam,
 O call thy wandering spirit home,
 Ere Heaven some direful scourge display,
 To chase thee from the devious way,
 Or leave thy wilful foot to tread
 The regions of the doubly dead.”
 Alternate crept o'er Izram's frame
 The chill of anguish, glow of shame :
 Quelled by the mild rebuke, he bent
 O'er his light bow with gaze intent,
 And spoke in turn subdued. “ If wile,
 Leila, thy conscious thought defile,
 If vital ether heave suppressed,
 As half I deem, within thy breast,
 And from thy lip's unfaded rose
 To fan the tress, that current flows,
 I call thee, by the net of love
 Thy maiden skill too firmly wove,
 By all the wrongs thy race have shed
 On Aztlan's line, and Izram's head,
 By faith professed, and matron pride,
 Fling the detested mask aside.—
 I call thee, by the awful name
 Of Him who lit the living flame,
 The fiat of whose frown can turn
 This pageant to reality,—
 Let not thy hardened spirit spurn
 A brother sinner's plea !
 Albert, remove the tress again ;
 I venture not—now swells the vein ;
 The quivering lash, the tints that rise,
 Bear token of a foul device.
 Ingrate ! for thee the crimson tide
 Of human life this hand hath dyed ;
 For thee a mother's heart I broke,
 For thee the living Lord forsook ;
 And comest thou now, with demon wrath,
 To haunt the exile's thorny path,
 Wormwood to blend with gall, and wrest
 The peace-branch from a bleeding breast !”
 While low he bent his throbbing head,
 A dart, with aim unerring sped,
 Whizzed loud and near ; then Leila's shriek
 Burst, as the current fanned her cheek.
 Starting he rose with brightening eye—
 “ The purple shaft ! the storm is nigh—
 Speed, Albert, to the cave—for thee,
 Vexed in Iberian treachery”——
 Claspng his neck, she strove to stay
 His steps—“ Dissembling tool, away !
 Thou'rt woman, and I would not harm—
 Another shaft ! untwine thine arm,
 Avert thy dauntless brow ; begone,
 Or force shall sever—Albert, on.

Then thus the serpent fold I tear,
 And fling thee hence, thou painted snare !
 Go, seek the hope to sinners free,
 Thy lures had doubly wiled from me.”
 Swift to the winding ridge they sprung ;
 Rebounding from its bulwark rung
 Rude bullets, winged with distant aim,
 That fast in deadly greeting came ;
 But turned by jutting crags, they sweep
 Innoxious down the shadowy steep,
 While press the youths their rapid road,
 And fence them in their wild abode.

Forth from a narrow niche of stone,
 Broke on their ear a sullen tone,
 Of stern reproof—in gloomy mood,
 Xloti before his comrade stood.
 “ Beseeemed it well, misguided youth,
 To dally with a broken snare,
 While duteous zeal, and loyal truth,
 Scattered their bootless vows in air ?
 Still to a wanton's shameless face
 Fall hecatombs of Aztlan's race ?
 For this, in yonder poisonous dell,
 Hath Xloti couched, to guard thy cell,
 While thickened on his gasping breath
 The sorest venom-taints of death ?
 Well may'st thou veil the brow that shone
 With glory tarnished, withered, gone !
 Yet mark me, Prince ; we yet may gain
 A dying wreath from baffled Spain,
 The band with one fierce whirlwind sweep,
 And perish on the mangled heap.”
 “ Xloti, forbear ; no gush of gore
 May sully this sad spirit more.”
 “ Thus is thy recreant soul subdued ?
 Softened to very womanhood !
 Will'st thou we blazon Izram's name
 With traitor's wile, or coward's shame ?
 —There burst the blaze of native pride !”
 “ Of native sin ; I could not bide
 Thy bitterness of speech, though long
 My step that path of shame hath trod,
 Faithful in crime, and bold in wrong,
 Traitor and coward both to God.
 Deeply my inmost thoughts confess
 Thy steadfast love, and deeply bless ;
 But urge no more ;—I may not stain
 My soul with murderous deed again.”
 “ Then art thou false, as copper snake
 That creeps within the flowery brake ;
 False as delusive vapours, spread
 O'er gulfs to tempt the pilgrim's tread.
 The flame I nursed in boyhood's days,
 Was but the birch-bark's crackling blaze ;
 There lurks some foul mysterious stain
 In thy fair brow, and azure vein .

Tezeuco's blood hath never flowed
 To brighten that obscure abode."
 The fire of wildest agony
 Swelled Izram's lip, and shot his eye ;
 The pang his shivering bosom wrung,
 But firm endurance chained his tongue.
 Xloti with folding arms perused
 His varying look, and deeply mused :
 " Thy hand hath never sped one blow
 Of justice on my country's foe ;
 I've heard thee brag of severed chain,
 Of vengeful gash, and shattered brain,
 Yet close beneath this well-girt hill
 Anselmo bides, to greet thee still."
 " Anselmo !"—" Why, the news I tell
 Hath flushed thee with a brighter joy
 Than when our ruined island cell
 Rang to thy praise. Perfidious boy !
 Reluctant here my head I shroud,
 Till spreads the night her darksome cloud :
 Failing in felon guise to glide
 Where strode my sires in kingly pride
 Thy shame shall doubly edge my sword
 To burst through yonder bandit horde.
 I barter not thy worthless life
 To screen me from unequal strife,
 But while my fettered race I mourn,
 Far from my soul thy memory spurn."
 " Yet hear me, Xloti"—" Not a word,
 Save those in days of glory heard.
 Say thou art Izram still, invest
 With warrior belt thy regal breast ;
 Brandish the rusted dirk on high,
 Raise thy bold fathers' battle-cry ;
 Fling back thy waving locks again,
 As chargers toss the streaming mane,
 While quivers on thy kindling brow
 The flash of death—it struggles now,
 Waked by my words—aye, let it blaze,
 To light us through the midnight maze,
 In blackening flame to blast the foe :—
 Then, step for step, and blow for blow,
 I'll tend thee ; with expiring gasp
 Hail thee unconquered, royal, brave,
 And greet thee with a hero's clasp,
 In freedom's reeking grave.
 —That gesture of dependence !—Leave
 My sickening sight till gloomy eve :
 Pour on my ear one pleading breath,
 I quit thy den, and rush to death." •
 Low in the farthest cavern laid,
 He wrapped him in his mantle's shade ;
 Till, issuing from the silent cell,
 Sternly he glanced, and frowned farewell.

" Firm as Urraca's rock, and dire
 As Soconuaca's lava fire !
 'Twas he who brought the fatal theme
 To feed my soul's ambitious dream ;

And oh how doubly poignant came
 From Xloti's lip the charge of shame !
 His magic call might almost raise
 Some blighting shape of other days ;
 But fettered now—with deep control,
 A mightier hand subdues my soul :
 He bends me to His sovereign will,
 Breathing the mandate, ' Be thou still,
 The conflict is the Lord's'—I wait
 In faith assured, and hope elate.
 Anselmo lives : the impious vow
 Unsealed ; nor this my guilty brow,
 Amid the wide, the frequent stain,
 Scared with the hideous brand of Cain."

Fierce is the din, and stern the jar,
 When monarchs lead a nation's war ;
 When combat's swarthy thunder-cloud
 In crimson wraps the rayless sun,
 Where low, beneath its curling brow,
 Lie legions lost for baubles won.
 More fierce the Christian's battle-day,
 While heaven and hell contest the prey,
 And hosts of dread immortals rise
 To struggle for a deathless prize.
 Let earth, in darkened vision, deem
 His conflict vain, his hope a dream,
 Judging her foul alloy may grace
 Jehovah's awful dwelling-place :—
 Polluted lies the precious ore,
 Bedded within her dingy core,
 And force must rend the flinty soil,
 And labour ply the lengthening toil,
 And care select, and flame refine,
 Till pure the costly metal shine,
 Exalted from its base abode,
 To deck the beauteous fane of God.

O'er the sad scene of human woes
 Again the radiant day-star glows ;
 Meridian lustres gem his throne,
 Flash on the wave, and gild the bough
 And brightly streak the vaulted stone,
 Untenanted, unguarded now.
 They sparkle on the distant plain,
 Where scour the gallant barbs of Spain,
 And bends the plumed cavalier
 O'er the proud mane, in full career.
 That motion, fetterless and bold,
 The wanton breeze and spacious sky,
 Ev'n through the captive's bosom rolled
 The bounding throb of liberty.
 Mantles elate the ruddy stream,
 Expands the eye's unconquered beam ;
 Nor darkening doom a spell could fling
 On buoyant youth's elastic spring.

Their foes descried the mantled flight
 Of Xloti 'neath bewildering night ;

And long that gliding form pursued,
Whose wily paths the gaze elude.
They deemed some ambushed foe had scanned
The weakness of their slender band,
And counselled, with approaching day,
To draw the net and snare the prey,
Ere, summoned to their chieftain's need,
Unwelcome succours mar the deed.
The rack, with ruthless skill, had wrung
A tale of blood from Nepuel's tongue :
Half won to Gondolph's secret aim,
He wavered 'twixt the lure and shame ;
But guiltless of the wile that brought
The tyrant to their caverned grot,
In mingled wrath and fear he heard
The haughty captive's threatful word
Of treason bared to Izram's view,
And goaded thus, the boaster slew ;
Devised a tale, to taint the dead
With suicidal act, and fled.
He marvelled how the gurgling wave
Forced entrance to their costly cave ;
But lips with two-fold treachery stained
Nor mercy found nor credence gained.

Long had Anselmo yearned, to sate
The cravings of vindictive hate ;
Immured he dwelt, while pompous fame
With martyr's wreath adorned his name.
Full many a subtle web he spun,
Counting his victim lightly won ;
But Hz, compassionate in wrath,

Whose word is sure, whose counsels stand,
Spread round the hapless wanderer's path

The shadow of His guardian hand.
Satanic biddings men fulfil,
Yet, blindly, work Jehovah's will,
Though, whet by bribes, the secret knife
Had long been aimed at Izram's life,
Nepuel alone, with traitor-word,
Revealed his country's regal hoard,
And baffled avarice dealt the meed,
Just guerdon of his impious deed.
Perplexed and shamed, with wary tread,
A kindred band Anselmo led ;
Blithely his ire would Izram doom
To public rage, and felon's tomb ;
But, leagued with Albert, who shall dare
To bid that fearless lip declare

What stain their bigot race defiles ?

Rousing from his pacific lair
The lion of the British Isles,
To press the yielding wave, and roar
Destruction on their guilty shore.

The youths were traced ; but fraud nor power
Might win that wild rock's guarded tower :
Yet Leila's feigning, ill withstood,
Had closed the victim's course in blood,

Had Xloti failed to circumvent,
With hand unseen, the dark intea
Ere foes, in widening ring withdrawn,
Could muster on the fatal lawn.
Once more enlivening beams arrayed
In golden streak the vaulted shade,
While, wafted on the fragrant air,
Came specious words in proffer fair,
And oaths of deep assurance given,
Pledged in the awful name of Heaven,
That nought essayed that legal band,
Save guidance to the peaceful strand,
To bid them unmolested sweep,
In British bark, the rolling deep.
Cleared from the charge of murderous deed,
Rebellion claimed a lighter meed ;
And lenient justice willed no more
Than exile from th' offended shore—
So Izram plighted faith, to stay
Each hostile band that barred their way.
Incredulous, with pensive smile,

The captives glanced their mutual thought ;
Surveyed their store's diminished pile—

Till whispering hope her phantoms brought :
Then swift, in shadowy form, succeed
The chalky cliff and dappled mead,
While murmur through a distant sky
Carols of peace and liberty.

“ Be life or death the tissue spun,”
Albert exclaimed, “ a rest is won :
Demons and men conspire in vain ;
We can but die, and death is gain.

Or, rescued from this tiger's grasp,
To plough the ocean's sparkling foam,
Oh, many a joyous hand shall clasp
Thy welcome, in my own fond home !
And Christian love shall softly steep
In soothing balm thy patriot wound ;
And sacred sympathy will weep,

While faith's strong pleadings rise around.
Come, and be thou in Ulric's stead,
To prop my father's drooping head ;
And, twin of Albert's soul, to share
Each pious toil, each sylvan care.”
A smile, a tear, on Izram's cheek,
His bosom's grateful swell bespeak.
“ Sweet is thy dream—if such His will,
May Heaven the gentle thought fulfil !
Drained is our limpid store, and spent
The cocoa's oily nutriment ;
Yield we to God, and humbly pray
His blessing on our foe-girt way.”

Swiftly across the trembling sod,
From morn to eve the coursers trod :
For yet the Spaniards' conscious fear
Pourtrayed avengers lurking near.
Veiled in persuasive courtesy,
Keenly they bent the falcon eye ;

The band in wary guard arrayed
 Around their prey, and grasped the blade.
 As fades the second day, they sweep,
 With weary hoof, a pine-crowned steep,
 And pause to breathe: the western glow
 Plays o'er a beauteous scene below:
 Varied, with undulating swell,
 Aspires the hill, and sinks the dell;
 Spreads the broad plain, and o'er the glades
 Cluster and bow gigantic shades:
 Here, rolling tides the surface break;
 There slumbers the majestic lake:
 And herds of snow white deer recline
 Where meads in flowery splendour shine.
 Skirting the lovely spot, they wend
 Far to the right, and still ascend;
 But fondly Izram's glistening eye
 Lingers on that soft scenery.

"How richly teems this sighing vale
 With sweets from Anahuac's vale!
 Land of my fathers! who shall wrest
 Thine impress from my yearning breast!—
 Thine Izram holds thee dearer far,

Than when in wrathful crime he stood,
 Pledging th' unhallowed vow of war,
 To bathe thy verdant robe in blood.
 Hope, faith, and love, would fain inspire
 My parting word with prophet-fire—
 Yes, thou shalt surely rise again,
 And shake thee from the sullen chain;
 Shining in uncreated rays,
 Beneath the gospel's mellowing blaze;
 Pealing, in form and spirit free,
 Exulting hymns of liberty!"

His eye with sacred rapture shone,
 And boldly swelled the solemn tone:
 No longer on that beauteous brow
 Reigned fiery hate, or gloomy care;
 Seraphic peace was beaming now,

The signet of the Lord was there.
 Wondering his foes beheld, and heard,
 The placid gaze, the temperate word,
 And inly thought, "Where lurks the fire
 Of parching scorn, and flaming ire?
 What hand hath burst the chord that spoke
 In thunder, by that theme awoke?"
 Jeering they asked, in bitter vein,
 "Hast thou no augury for Spain?

Iberia blends, in ancient tale,
 Her name with Anahuac's vale"—

A passing flash from Izram's eye
 Gave comment on his calm reply.

"Though freedom rive, with generous hand,
 The fetter from your parent land,
 Your practised grasp will seize the chain,
 And close the severed links again.
 The burrowing mole, espoused to night
 Brooks not the smile of ruddy light;

Basking beneath a genial ray,
 The river tribes will shrink away;
 Each struggling form intent to hide
 In the deep earth, or caverned tide.
 Custom your hapless race hath pent
 In tyranny's dark element:
 The yoke on other nations thrown
 Trammels, with power reflex, your own:
 O'erspread with superstition's pall,
 The brazen bonds your land enthrall:
 Beneath a blinding curse ye roam,
 Tyrants abroad, and slaves at home.
 Seek ye for freedom? on the word
 Of freedom's law, and freedom's Lord:
 Loosen the captive's irons; rend
 The bands of cruelty and strife;
 Idols abjure, and meekly bend
 To Christ alone for light and life."

Another noon, and, still remote,
 Murmured the ocean's lofty note:
 Then Albert, in his stirrup raised,
 Eastward with kindling ardour gazed.
 "Hear'st thou the mighty hymn that poura
 Its descant round Britannia's shores?
 Hark! how the rolling cadence swells—
 Oh, many a tale that billow tells,
 Calling my inmost soul to bear
 Symphonious part, in praise and prayer."
 A short descent, and ocean gave
 Full on their view his heaving wave;
 And while the rocky shore they near,
 Izram remarked, "No port is here:
 No swelling sail salutes the view,
 No banner streaks th' unbroken blue;
 But moulders many a riven wreck,
 On the dark coast, in frequent speck.
 Our earthly pilgrimage is o'er—
 Albert, thine eager thought no more
 To thy parental roof may roam;
 We haste to an eternal home."

"Then welcome be the summons given:
 Jesus hath oped the gate of heaven."
 Rudely upon their rugged path
 Now pressed the guides, in rising wrath,
 Half quelled by mockery—"See the tide
 Heaving its crests in loyal pride:
 A Briton rules the wave, and brings
 The last bold son of Aztlan's kings
 To press the surge—this duteous air
 Waits on your will in breezes fair;
 And currents set, with sturdy force,
 Right to the east their favouring course."
 Culled from the wrecks, a shallow boat
 Their ruthless hands prepare to float;
 Still jibing—"Did thy conscious thought,
 Thou kingly prophet! augur nought,

While on our secret record stood
 Anselmo's wrong, and Gondolph's blood ?
 And thou, whose impious rage could scorn
 Salvation's God in triumph borne,
 Hop'dst thou we had not might, to bow
 Thy stubborn neck and brazen brow ?
 Our thousands with applauding breath
 Had drowned your yells of lingering death,
 But policy prevailed—How tame
 Stands the bright heir of Aztlan's fame !
 Mute as his mighty sires, who fled,
 Dumb with amaze, and wild with dread
 When thundered forth our warrior host
 Stern greeting, on their vassal coast.
 Can fear the braggart's tongue enchain ?
 Hast thou no parting curse for Spain ?"
 " No ; may a Saviour's pleading win
 Remission of this crowning sin !
 On your polluted souls be shown
 Such mercy as redeems our own :
 Circle a few short years,—we meet,
 Confronted, at the judgment seat ;
 And, grace despised, Almighty ire
 Must whelm you in eternal fire.
 Albert, proceed : this bounding wave,
 Like a triumphal car, shall bear
 Our souls to bliss, and yield a grave,
 'Till dust revive that bliss to share."
 " Brother, I come, o'erjoyed to twine,
 In life or death, my fate with thine.
 For ye, whose erring scorn would shame
 Your patient prey with coward's name,
 And on the very verge of heaven
 His spirit taint with passion's leaven,—
 Nor man nor demon quelled the soul
 That cowed ye once with proud control :
 The Lord alone that conquest won,
 A rebel crushed, and claimed a son.
 Mark, doth his blooming cheek appear
 By vengeance scorched, or blanched by fear ?
 Mysterious Heaven the deed allows,
 While for the youth's immortal brows,
 Unwittingly, your hands prepare
 A brighter crown than monarchs wear."
 Poising the shallop's rocking side,
 With foot advanced, his comrade stood,
 Calm as the brooding dove, and eyed
 The tumult of that swelling flood :
 A smile of joyous meaning broke
 O'er his glad lip as Albert spoke ;
 Then lightly, through the slender spray,
 They gained the bark, and launched away.

Fleety the rolling waters bore
 Their burden from the fatal shore.
 There rose no billow's crested head,
 The deep a sheeny surface spread,
 Beneath a storm-portending sky,
 Heaving unbroken, huge, and high ;

Though oft the roughening breeze impressed
 Rude circlets on its glossy breast ;
 And wide and low the purple cloud,
 With thunder fraught, in menace bowed,
 While on its dark verge melt away
 Dim relics of the evening ray.
 In air and ocean closely pent,
 Struggled the storm : the waters vent,
 Unbroken yet, a moaning sound,
 While falling shadows thicken round.

Curtained beneath that timeless night,
 The towering rocks no more appear ;
 They fade from Izram's yearning sight,
 While trembles on his lash a tear ;
 And sad his pensive accents swell—
 " My own devoted land, farewell !
 Though wrapped in black oblivious skies,
 Thy dawn shall break, thy splendour rise ;
 But darksome deeds may long prevail,
 Ere rent thy spirit's ebon veil.
 Not mine to hail thee, blest and free,
 Yet teems my latest sigh with thee ;
 And mine, perchance, from yonder skies,
 To watch thy ripening destinies.
 List, Albert, to the thunder's voice—
 Now could my inmost soul rejoice,
 In prospect of the tranquil shore,
 Where sin and sorrow war no more,
 But thou, my victim," — " Canst thou
 deem

A spirit of celestial birth
 So wedded to a grovelling dream,
 So tangled in the mire of earth,
 To change, were yet the choice mine own,
 This billow for a kingly throne ?
 No :—for my raptured eye hath caught
 Visions of glory, passing thought :
 Terrestrial pageants shrink and die
 In beams of immortality.
 I mount the sapphire heights ; I see
 Jesus, the Lamb who died for me :
 I press amid th' adoring throng,
 And wave the palm, and learn the song.
 Even now, angelic squadrons sweep,
 With viewless step, this awe-struck deep,
 Circle our joyous course, and mark
 The progress of our gliding bark.
 How richly o'er the waters steal
 The echoes of that distant peal !
 How swift the trembling flash ! a light
 Of quenchless noon is ours to-night.
 Commotion rudely rocks the tide,
 See how these crazy planks divide ;
 The surges press in foaming chase,
 And tidings of deliverance tell ;
 Welcome the note—this last embrace,
 Dear Izram, speaks a long farewell."

"Recall the word ; we sever not,
 Nor such the spirit's chilling lot :
 Death triumphs o'er the withering clay,—
 Immortal souls deride his sway,
 And perfect, in ethereal birth,
 Th' embryo bud that swelled on earth.
 Oh, thine hath been an angel's care,
 And thine the love that seraphs bear ;
 And hast thou toiled so sore below,
 Through peril, darkness, blood, and woe,
 To win me from th' infernal strife,
 And draw me to the fount of life,
 And here, to glory's threshold, led
 My fainting heart, and faltering tread,
 To lose me now—when, fetter-free,
 Th' exulting spirit springs on high,
 And sin's detested progeny
 Low in unfathomed waters lie ?
 Can love, unearthly, pure, as thine,
 Dimolve beneath material brine,
 A sparkle of celestial fire
 As elemental dross expire ?
 No, Albert : no disunion this ;
 Co-heiritors of endless bliss,
 Down, down to ocean's deepest cell,
 Be plunged that gloomy word, farewell !
 And be the rivets doubly driven
 That clasp our souls in bonds of heaven !"

Impetuous gales, careering, urge
 To fiercer speed the writhing surge ;
 Rushed the tumultuous tides, to rock
 Their giddy prey with wilder shock :
 Buoyed on the mounting foam they go,
 And totter in the gulf below :
 Then burst the straining bark, and gave
 Its burden to the greedy wave.
 Instinctive nature struggled still,
 While youthful courage, nerve, and skill,
 Held the terrific king at bay,
 And triumphed o'er the angry spray.
 But short the toil—unsevered yet,
 Their souls the awful summons met—
 "He calls ! forbear this idle strife—
 Why linger at the gate of life ?
 The crown is won, the conflict o'er ;
 Together let us sink, and soar.
 Receive us, Lord !"——The arm they closed,
 And, bowing, on the wave reposed :
 Soft, from that pall of sable cloud,
 A farewell flash in brightness came,
 And broad upon their liquid shroud
 Quivered a while the lingering flame ;
 And sadly o'er the moaning tide
 Low thunders pealed the funeral dirge—
 In death embracing, side by side,
 They sank beneath the eddying surge.

NOTES.

Page 10, l. 55.—“*Know'st thou Chiapa's soil,*” &c.

“THE inhabitants of the province of Chiapa are distinguished above all others. They owe their superiority to the advantage of having had for their teacher Las Casas, who originally prevented them from being oppressed. They surpass their countrymen in size, genius, and strength: their language has a peculiar softness and elegance: they are painters, musicians, and dexterous in all arts. Their principal town is called Chiapa dos Indos. It is only inhabited by natives of the country, who form a community, consisting of about 4,000 families, amongst which are found many of the Indian nobility. They form naval armies with their boats: they engage, attack, and defend themselves with surprising agility: they excel no less in the chase of bulls, cudgelling, dancing, and all bodily exercises. They build towns and castles of wood, which they cover with oil-cloth, and besiege in form.—From these particulars we see what the Mexicans were capable of, had they passed under the dominion of a conqueror, possessing moderation and good sense enough to relax the chains of their servitude, instead of riveting them.”—RAYNAL.

Page 10, l. 79.—“*Sons of those illustrious dead,*” &c.

The Caziques were sovereign princes, each in his own territory: they displayed the state, and exercised the privileges of independent monarchs, but followed the imperial standard in battle, and are said to have brought each from 50,000 to 100,000 warriors into the field. Their title was hereditary, and to a select number of them was committed the task of electing the Emperor. The Caziques of Tezeuco and Tacuba were always included among these: they appear to have been the most powerful and influential of the native princes, and their territories were hardly inferior in extent to those of the Mexican monarch.

Page 13, l. 37.—“*New treasures to the gaze unfold,*”

The author has availed herself of poetic licence (however disputable her pretensions to a poet's name) in following the more romantic and less probable accounts given by Spanish writers of the costly treasures and exquisite workmanship displayed in Mexico's imperial palaces. Dr. Robertson, while protesting against these exaggerated descriptions, has doubtless erred in the opposite extreme; depreciating the genius, wealth, civilization, arts, and policy of the Mexicans, as palpably as other chroniclers have over-rated them. The fanatical barbarism of an ignorant Franciscan, John of Zummaraga, who committed to the flames all he could collect of the national hieroglyphic records, under the absurd pretence of their being monuments of idolatry, has deprived Europeans of valuable documents tending to illustrate such attainments in science as few are disposed to admit this extraordinary people had made, though very competent judges have asserted it. Astronomy, music, medicine, and political economy, were certainly understood among them: and if the uncontradicted testimony of eye-witnesses may be credited, they were accomplished architects, horticulturists, sculptors, goldsmiths, jewellers, and excelled in all the imitative arts.

Page 15, l. 9.—“*Aztlan's native train.*”

Aztlan was the country from whence migrated the tribe of Aztecas, who founded the Mexican empire.

Page 18, l. 60.—“*That mysterious treasury.*”

It is well known that the heroic Emperor Guatimozin was most barbarously, but ineffectually, tortured by the unprincipled Cortez, who caused him to be stretched on burning coals, to extort the discovery of treasures which he was suspected of having concealed from the merciless depredators. His prime minister expired

beside him, after indicating a disposition to disclose the secret, which was checked by the memorable reproof of Guatimozin, who exclaimed, "Am I now on a bed of roses?" This royal sufferer, whose only crime was a gallant defence of his throne and people, was hanged three years afterwards, on an improbable charge of conspiring against the usurpers of his crown, whose captive he yet remained! Do not our days exhibit an awful visitation of the sins of the fathers upon their impenitent children, in the accumulated miseries under which Spain is yet groaning? The atrocities of Cortez, his companions, and their successors, would have disgraced a horde of savages who never had heard of a righteous God, or a judgment to come: but when it is considered how the name of Christ was blasphemed through them, while His pure word was prostituted to their iniquitous purposes, and His symbolical cross made the

standard under which to perpetrate their enormities, against an unoffending, confiding people, we cannot but shudder in contemplating the now irrevocable doom of the aggressors, and long to address to their descendants the warning voice, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

It is futile and contemptible to argue that the idolatrous Mexicans were more superstitious, inhuman, and bloodthirsty, than their invaders. "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." They were pagans: the Spaniards, on the contrary, assumed the Christian name: and the only message that the Christian is commissioned to bear among heathen nations is, **GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST: ON EARTH PEACE; GOOD-WILL TOWARDS MEN. BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND YE SHALL BE SAVED.**

HELEN FLEETWOOD.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Who that has seen the sun's uprising, when his first bright beam comes sparkling over the billows on a clear autumnal morning, but has felt a thrill of gladness at his heart—an involuntary, perhaps an unconscious ascription of praise to the Creator, who has so framed him that all his innate perverseness cannot bar the entrance of that thrill? The brisk wind that curls the wave, and flings its light spray abroad, does but multiply mirrors for the imaged ray to flash from; and when the mighty orb has wholly lifted his disk above the swelling outline of the beautifully-rounded horizon, and looks down upon the surmounted barrier, sending beam after beam to traverse that watery world, and to gild it with dazzling splendour, who does not accord the palm of natural magnificence to that of which no adequate idea can be conveyed to one who has not looked upon it—sunrise at sea.

It was on such a morning, in the month of September, when the breeze was strong, the billows tumultuous, and the sun resplendent in a clear blue sky, that Helen Fleetwood paused on the edge of a cliff which overlooked the eastern wave, to indulge, perhaps for the thousandth time, an emotion of delight not the less vivid because Helen was a simple country girl whose thoughts had never learned to clothe themselves in language worthy of the occasions that called them into exis-

tence. Of the milk-pail which swung lightly to and fro upon her arm, she could have discoursed with judgment and propriety: but of that blaze of light, first stealing, then flashing, then broadly spreading in a refulgent mantle, over the surface of the deep, Helen had little to say. She nevertheless felt its joyous influence through every fibre of her frame, and her young heart danced as gaily beneath its light as the most airy bubble upon the billow's crest. In like manner Helen's lips had hitherto been mute, when others spoke of brighter beams, the influence of the Sun of Righteousness, as he rises with healing in his wings upon a benighted world of tumult and strife; but there was that within her bosom which owned his power, and rejoiced in his light.

Tripping by her side as she walked on, and wheeling in a restless circle around her when she paused, little Mary Green bore the three-legged stool that was to aid them in their operation on the two cows, whose distant lowings were occasionally audible during the short pauses of the ocean's measured roar. It was not in Mary's nature to be silent long; and, after gazing up into Helen's face, to read in its happy expression the pleasure that her loving heart never failed to reciprocate, the little girl gave utterance to her companion's thought and her own, by remarking "Sunrise is very pretty, Helen."

"Yes, it is," replied the other, "and a pity it would have been to lose the fine sight by letting some sleepy little girls take their own time to get up."

Mary laughed: "Why you know the mornings are not so warm now as they were a month ago; and there was hardly

light enough to dress by. I am always glad afterwards; but somehow I don't like giving up my own way at the time."

"Nor I," said Helen: "but you know, Mary, one's duty is the best rule to go by; and one never regrets in the long run having done so."

"Talking of a long run," rejoined Mary, whose taste by no means accorded with any thing savouring of a lecture, "let us race now till we come to the gate, or the cows will be tired of waiting, and get cross; and what will old Buckle say then?"

Helen assented; and with one parting glance over the bright sea, turned towards the shed where the cows were kept; and away they both ran till the intervening stile obliged them to pause ere they crossed it.

The full pail, nicely poised as it was on Helen's head, required a steadier pace in returning: and the two girls pursued the chat, which indeed rarely knew an interval during the many waking hours they passed together.

"The people in towns," said Helen, "would think it a great hardship to be out a-milking at this time of day."

"They are better off than we:" replied Mary, to whom the idea of a long morning nap was by no means unpleasing.

"Better off in some things, Mary," said her companion thoughtfully: "but to see the sickly looks of the ladies who come down this way on their road to the bathings, I am not sure I would change with them."

"What! not to ride in your own coach?" inquired Mary with a stare of astonishment.

"I don't know: I hav'nt yet had more walking than agreed with me. Somehow too, the morning is so pleasant, and the fresh air does make one feel so hearty and alive, that if I was in a coach I think I'd be tempted to jump out and take a run."

Mary laughed loudly at the idea of a lady racing against her own coach and horses, but admitted that she should not like to be forced to ride at all times—only when she felt sleepy or lazy. Thus merrily discoursing, the girls approached the gate of what might be called a farm-yard on a small scale; within the limits of which rose a cottage with a very steep pointed roof, well thatched, walls of snowy whiteness, long, narrow casements, and

a porch recently added to its entrance; and there stood a stout elderly man, leaning his folded arms on the lower half of the door.

"There's old Buckle," whispered Mary, "and looking as cross as two sticks."

He certainly did not wear an aspect of much sweetness, when, flinging the little partition open, he advanced, and reached the gate before the girls could lay a hand on its fastenings.

"You need'nt come any farther," growled Mr. Buckle, taking the pail from Helen and swinging it over the gate in a pettish way. "It's a wonder you'd take the trouble of fetching it at all, and only keep me waiting three quarters of an hour."

"Please, sir, I'm very sorry indeed," said Helen, dropping a curtsy. "I didn't think it was so late as that."

"The sun must have overslept himself, sir," added Mary, "or else I'm sure we are in time to five minutes or so."

"Hold your tongue, sauce-box! Sad girls—lay in bed half the morning, play about t'other half; keep me fasting all the while, and then give me impertinence. All the work of the farm at a stand still. No, I'll not employ such idle baggages any longer. You may tell your granny that from me."

"Please sir"—Mary began.

"Off with you, Miss Pert: no two-pence to-day I'll promise you. Get ye gone; I'll not trouble you much longer to milk my cows. Off with ye!"

The girls intimidated by the stamp that accompanied the words turned to depart, Helen with a curtsy, Mary with something more resembling a shrug than an obeisance. Before they had proceeded many yards, the old gentleman's voice was heard again:

"Stop, can't ye? What a hurry the little toads are in to go and punish an honest old woman for their own bad doings! Here, you Nelly, take that with you, not that you've earned it this time, but it doesn't become a respectable farmer like me to stop the wages that honest people set you to earn." And three broad penny-pieces fell at her feet.

Another low curtsy from Helen and a farther progress of a few steps were followed by a louder shout from the farmer: "Mind, you may tell old Mrs. Green to send

in the evening for a jug of stale milk, and a handful of oatmeal for the ailing boy. So now be off with you, you idlers!"

"What a funny old fellow he is," observed Mary, when far enough to give utterance to the laugh she had with difficulty suppressed: "but it's a shame to let him scold at us in that fashion."

"Old Buckle," observed Helen, "is never in right earnest but when he does a good-natured thing. All his hard words go for nothing."

"Then why do you look frightened, and be so humble to him?"

"He speaks so loud, and looks so angry, it does half frighten me at the time: and as for being humble, Mary, it's the duty of such as we to show respect to our betters."

"Oh, we are as good as old Buckle any day; only he's getting up in the world, and we are getting down, you know," observed the little girl, skipping backwards before her companion, as gaily as if she had announced the reverse of this proposition. Helen sighed; for she knew there were hearts growing heavy under the consciousness of what gave poor little Mary no concern.

Helen Fleetwood was the orphan child of one who, being tempted by a fine morning sky to launch upon the waves his worldly all—his boat and implements of fishing—was with them engulfed by the surges that a sudden storm lashed into fury. Helen, who was four years old at the time, retained a distinct recollection of the crowds that pressed to one spot on the shore, near which stood her paternal cottage, and the shrieks and wailings that burst forth when the few survivors of that party who together started before sunrise, returned at the twilight hour of eve with sad tales of their companions' fate. Fleetwood was but one among five or six whose widows were pacing the beach in wild distraction, or sitting stupified beneath the blow. Helen could also remember the day when, some time after this, a corpse, decomposed beyond the possibility of recognition, was cast ashore on a sandbank just above low-water mark, and identified by some fragment of wearing apparel as that of her father. She saw him not: but too well did her memory retain the impression of that moment when the Widow

Green, holding her by the hand, directed her gaze into a coffin, where lay the heart-broken mother and her new-born babe peacefully shrouded together. Of these things the girl never spoke, and it was kindly hoped that they had faded from her naturally cheerful mind: but it was far otherwise.

The Widow Green had experienced affliction in another form; of all the children whom she had reared, her son William best repaid the maternal cares bestowed on him; and when he married, the first act of his independence as master of a comfortable cottage, was to place his mother in the choicest of its rooms. His wife, a kind-hearted young woman, heartily concurred in the proceeding, and reaped her reward when the rapid increase of a young family gave full scope to the valuable services of a judicious grandmother. All went well with them; and the readiness with which poor little Helen was adopted into the domestic party on the old woman's suggestion, more closely cemented their mutual confidence and love. But, alas! William's third child sickened of small-pox; the eldest caught the infection, then the mother, and all three died. Poor Green struggled hard to bear up, for the sake of those who remained; but a violent cold taken through continual transitions from the close, heated atmosphere of a sick room to the keen night air of February, in his walks across the common to the doctor's shop, fell on his lungs; and consumption soon laid him beside those whom he had dearly loved and deeply mourned.

The widow was a woman of vigorous mind, doubly armed in the panoply of faith, and enabled to cast herself, with the children committed to her, on Him whom she had found to be a strong-hold in the day of trouble. Her charge consisted of three boys and a girl, the survivors of William's family, and Helen Fleetwood. Richard Green was a year older than Helen; James three years younger; and Mary his junior by nearly two years. The little Willy was but eight at the period when this story commences; and Richard was seventeen. Their father held his cottage, with a field and small garden, on a lease of lives, and bequeathed them to his mother, in trust for Richard, should the lease remain good until he came of age. The

landlord indeed, who had granted it on exceedingly favourable terms, promised a renewal; but he died soon after his tenant, and his verbal engagement could not bind the heir at law—a gentleman residing at a distance, and leaving every thing in the hands of his trusty agent.

Mrs. Green proved herself a wise and faithful steward. The cottage was larger than their diminished household required; and she let two rooms to a respectable woman, the widow of the parish beadle, who paid liberally, according to her means, and proved a quiet, friendly lodger. She let the field by the year, for its just value, which nearly settled the rent of the whole premises; and managed the little garden so well that its produce brought in a small sum, after supplying the family table. A few fowls, Helen's peculiar care, yielded their quota of profit in the neighbouring village market; James kept rabbits, which, thriving well on the refuse of the garden, helped to replenish the general purse: the same prolific garden nearly maintained a pair of ducks, presented to little Willy in their infancy, and soon learning to forage for themselves, to the great advantage of lettuces and savoy, which had often borne the marks of sundry nocturnal depredators, against whom the said ducks waged exterminating war. Willy sank a little round tub in the fowl-yard, and predicted that his ducks would soon prove the most valuable of their possessions.

Richard had profited well by the advantages placed within his reach: he was of a serious, thoughtful turn, but exceedingly active. The school where his father had placed him at seven years old was established for the benefit of boys in an humble walk of life, and the gratuitous teaching was excellent. Richard acquired whatever was to be learned; by his diligence and good conduct earning a reputation that ensured him employment during every spare hour among the neighbours; and his gains, from which he never deducted a half-penny for his own gratification, added to the produce of his grandmother's unwearied industry and that of Helen, assisted in time by the improving habits of Mary, who was often roused into "a great fight," as she called it, against her natural love of ease, placed the family above want, and indeed in possession of

every comfort they could reasonably desire.

But alas for the stability of human happiness, so far as it is dependent on perishable things! The last life in the lease was one on which they might fairly have reckoned for many a long year to come. A severe illness, however, seized on the strong frame of the young man, the only survivor of the three named in that document; and although he rallied in some degree, his state was evidently a precarious one. The lodger, too, was summoned to take possession of some little property left to her in another county, and must leave them shortly. James, the second boy, fell into weak health, imposing an additional care and expense on the household, just as he and they anticipated his becoming an important help, through a good situation that was offered, but for which his increasing debility unfitted him. All these things tended to cloud the atmosphere, and made even the giddy Mary observe that they were "going down in the world."

Of this, however, no visible token as yet appeared; and when the two girls, fresh from their early walk, drew near the beloved cottage, all was as smiling as their own faces. James had cleaned out his rabbit-hutch; Willy was gazing with admiration at the exploits of his young ducks in their narrow pond, and Richard made the most of a spare half hour in digging up the bed where a crop of peas had yielded their last produce. As Helen and Mary approached, he struck the spade into the ground, gave his hands a rinsing under the pump, and joined the group, who together entered the cottage door with wholesome appetites for their breakfast.

Breakfast, however, was not the first concern with this assembled family. The girls, throwing off their bonnets, and hastily smoothing back the hair which had become somewhat disordered by the sea-breeze, followed the widow Green into an adjoining room, occupied by the lodger, and the boys brought up the rear. On a little round table lay the Holy Bible, with a small manual of family devotion; and on the appearance of Mrs. Barker, who promptly answered the accustomed signal, and her settlement in an arm chair, all seated themselves: the widow Green se-

lected a portion of scripture, read it with much deliberation, and offered up a devout prayer of thanksgiving for past mercies, with supplication for guidance, and every needful blessing through the day. A short greeting between the young people and their lodger, marked by affectionate respect on their side, and great kindness on hers, concluded the scene: they then hastened back, to enjoy the morning's meal.

"What sort of a walk had you, girls?" inquired Richard. "I understand Mary was not quite awake when Helen pulled her out at the door."

"I was rubbing my eyes," answered Mary, "but awake for all that. 'Tis only seven now, and two good hours have I been on my feet."

"And a great blessing it is, my child," observed the old lady, "to be up and at work while many are lying on the bed of sickness, and not a few on the bed of sloth."

"I wish old John Buckle would lie in bed," continued the little girl, "and not get up to scold as he does."

"Fie, Mary," said Helen, laying the three pence beside the old lady's saucer; "consider how kind he is at heart:" and she delivered his message.

"I don't mind a few hard words," remarked James, "if I get a good basin of milk broth along with them."

"Hard words break no bones," said Richard; "and if none of us ever come to get hard blows into the bargain, we may think ourselves well off."

"Blows! I should like to see the person who would try to beat *me*!" exclaimed little Mary, in high disdain.

"Hush, my dear child," responded the widow. "Strokes of the rod are sometimes needful for us; and we have a Father in heaven who will apply them when he sees good. You must not speak so hastily," she continued, as Mary opened her lips to reply: "the wise man tells us that a haughty spirit cometh before a fall. Let us be humble."

"You had better mind what granny says," added James: "none of us will ever be the worse for minding her."

All eyes were turned, beaming with affection, upon the old woman, while a half-whispered assent escaped from every

lip. If ever any person succeeded in attaching all around her to herself and to each other, the widow Green assuredly did so. She knew it, she saw it daily and hourly, and she numbered it among the chiefest of her earthly blessings.

"Now, granny," said Richard, when the short, frugal repast was ended, "I've a long errand after school, and you need not expect me home till supper. There's some parish business to do, and I must take a letter from the overseer to Mr.—I forget his name—the new vestry-clerk, and wait for an answer. So don't be uneasy if I am late."

A hearty good bye was exchanged, and away went the lad to his school-work, which was that of a teacher rather than a pupil. We will leave the cottagers to their daily avocations, and take a peep into a higher grade of society.

CHAPTER II.

PARISH AFFAIRS.

ABOUT a mile distant from the widow's cottage, hard by the school, and not far from the village church, stood that truly national edifice, the workhouse. On the forenoon of this day, eventful to many a poor creature whose sole dependence was on the result of their deliberations, a knot of functionaries assembled in the room set apart for transacting parish affairs, and very earnest were the looks of those engaged in the discussion. The churchwarden, a prudent, intelligent man; the overseer, the doctor, and two of the general committee were present. The clergyman had not yet made his appearance: and while suspending the special business of the day until he should arrive, they fell into the important subject of their respective duties.

"It cannot be doubted," said the churchwarden, "that each man has a twofold sphere of action: the one embracing his personal and family concerns, and the other extending so as to take in his relative duties to the community of which he is a member, and to the country of which he is a subject."

"Very just," responded one of the gentlemen; "and another undeniable proposition is, that the greater duty is the more imperative, and on all occasions where they clash, the inferior claim must yield to the superior."

"And which do you consider the greater?" asked the doctor.

"The one that takes the widest range, of course," replied the last speaker.

"Yes," resumed the churchwarden; "and on this principle we must regulate our proceedings in all matters brought before us to-day. Private feeling may plead, personal interest may perhaps back that plea: but we sit here to administer the funds of the parish, whose representatives we are; and our object must be, to secure the greatest possible saving in all branches of our expenditure."

"Provided," remarked the doctor, "that in rendering justice to one class of our fellow-parishioners, we inflict no wrong on another, and perhaps the more numerous class."

"Meaning the paupers, I presume?"

"Yes: though with us they do not constitute the majority—far from it, indeed—I conceive their interests are entrusted to us in at least as extensive and important a measure as those of the superior section."

"Excuse me, sir," said the overseer, "I don't see how that can be. Money, sir, money is surely the most important trust a man can have in his charge. That is, a layman," he added, discerning from a window the clergyman's approach.

"A little practice in my line, Mr. Miles," said the doctor, turning up a shrewd glance at the speaker, who stood near his chair, "would convince you that, in most instances, health, limb, and life are of more value to a man than money itself."

"The health, limbs, and lives of the parish could not be in better keeping than they are, sir," answered the overseer, bowing low to the professional gentleman, whose half smile and shake of the head bespoke what he had sometimes been heard to declare in that room, of the inefficacy of all his drugs, combined with all his skill, to do justice to his charge, where common nutriment was wanting to support the mortal frame. However, the entrance of the clergyman, with the general move-

ment that greeted his arrival, prevented farther remark.

"I am late," said Mr. Barlow; "but this wide-spreading though trifling epidemic has thrown an accession of duty on my hands, in the visiting way."

"It is trifling, sir," eagerly responded the overseer; "and your testimony to that fact is of value."

"I merely meant to distinguish it from the formidable fever of last spring," said the minister: "nothing is trifling to the poor man whom it disables, while it lasts, from earning his daily bread."

Two or three corroborative nods from the doctor rendered it advisable to the majority to drop this subject: for though the minority was small, usually consisting of these two individuals alone, they were so provokingly united in appealing to the evidence of their daily personal experience, in confirmation of their no less provoking prejudices against what went by the name of parochial economy, and so quietly determined in pursuing their object, that they gave the board more trouble than even the paupers whose advocates they were. The clients were easily silenced, if not convinced, by certain summary modes of procedure, well understood by their relieving friends: but these gentlemen had a licence, arising even less from their offices than from their high character, and of it they frequently availed themselves, to the no small discomfiture of their brethren, and the occasional overthrow of their best schemes.

We are far from saying that in these schemes the framers were actuated by any other than a conscientious, though certainly an erroneous view of their duties. They held in trust the amount of a public, legal contribution, provided for a definite purpose; and this they considered that they must, as good stewards, husband to the uttermost. Had the contemplated outlay been one merely affecting the inanimate creation, this principle might perhaps have been worked out to the farthest stretch of their ingenuity; but when the question resolved itself into this—upon how scanty a quota of necessary sustenance might human life be supported, so as to avert from its object the climax of actual starvation; and to how minute a

fraction might relief be diminished, so as not to lose the semblance of relief to those for whose special use the fund was set apart—then the calculators were necessarily in imminent peril of sacrificing on the shrine of supposed public duty, not only all the finer feelings of humanity, all the brotherly observances that man owes to man, but also the obedience due from every professing follower of Christ to the explicit, unmistakable command of his divine Master, "Do ye unto all men even as ye would they should do unto you."

Now, whatever militates against the scriptural law of love, is always found to be a hardening process. That such was the result of a persevering plan to grind the faces of the poor, though not originating in any natural propensity so to do, will be manifested but too plainly in the progress of this narrative. We are to follow a single family through vicissitudes that thousands of English families are perpetually encountering; and in the progress of our tale we will drop that part of the proceeding which had no direct reference to them, and pass on to the moment when, the result of this special meeting having been duly notified for the information of the distant vestry-clerk, preparatory to a broad-day, Richard Green was called in, to bear the letter to its destination. The clergyman and doctor, having their hands full, departed as soon as the business was closed; but the rest of the party remained, consisting of the churchwarden, the overseer, and two others; of whom one, a Mr. Stratton, had earned the reputation of being the shrewdest man at foreseeing, and the most skilful at averting, impending burdens from the parish, within the whole district. Indeed the eminence thus conceded to him became doubly injurious; for in his anxiety to act up to the character, he was led into paths of deception and cruelty, from which he would otherwise have shrank.

Richard, having made his bow, stood, cap in hand, awaiting his orders. A short whispering dialogue passed between the overseer and Mr. Stratton; at the close of which the latter addressed him with much kindness. "Well, my boy, I hear you are getting on with credit, and likely to make your way respectably in the world?"

Richard blushed, and bowed.

"The cottage that your father left is nicely kept: I often ride past and notice the good repair of all about it. Does the widow Green manage still for you?"

"My grandmother, sir, has taken care of it, and of us too, ever since father died, seven years ago."

"Indeed! a worthy old lady. And how many of you may there be?"

"Myself is the eldest, sir; and James, and Mary, and Willy; besides Helen Fleetwood."

"She's an orphan, I think?"

"Quite, sir; and she has no friend in the world to care for her except granny—and us."

"Humph! Where was she born?"

"In this parish, sir; and has always lived in it all her life," answered Richard with a vivacity that showed he thought either Helen or the parish had somewhat to boast of in the circumstance.

"How old are you?" asked the overseer.

"Seventeen last July, and Helen is sixteen."

"And James?"

"Thirteen: but being very sickly, you see, sir, he doesn't look so much. Mary is as tall as he, though she's but eleven; and Willy is just eight, if you please, sir," said Richard, who seemed highly gratified at being permitted thus to parade the objects dearest to his heart before the mental view of such fine gentlemen.

A pause ensued; marked by an interchange of wise looks between the attentive auditors of this family chronology. Mr. Stratton then spoke.

"Oh, by the way, Richard, you will be master of that cottage, won't you?"

"Granny will be mistress of it as long as she lives, and I live," replied the boy, colouring deeply with emotion.

"Very good: I approve your feeling. And the lease is for ever, isn't it?"

"No, sir: for three lives."

"All stout and hearty, I hope?"

"Two of them are gone," said the boy, "and Mr. Hewitt is the third."

A sagacious nod from the overseer directed Mr. Stratton's attention to this point, while he repeated, "George Hewitt of Oakfield—you know him."

"And the present landlord," pursued Stratton, "is Mr. Grey, of Ipswich?"

"Yes, sir: we hope he'll renew the lease, as the old landlord told father he'd certainly do if the lives ran out in his time."

"Well, Richard, be a good lad; you've a deal of information, I see, and may turn out a great credit to your family. Now take this letter to Mr. Hall, and be sure you wait for an answer, and deliver it here, to the governor, this evening. Do you mind?"

"I will take care to do it, your honour," replied the lad; then pocketing the letter, he made his obeisance, and hastened away.

"A nice, sharp fellow that," observed the church-warden. "As to the place, it can never be his; but he will maintain himself respectably, I doubt not."

"I would rather not trust to that," said the overseer: "we have fellows as sharp as he on our hands, picking oakum here in this workhouse. As to the family, they are as good as on the books already. Hewitt's life is not worth a day's purchase; Grey has promised—that is, I am sure he will find more profitable tenants than an old woman and a pack of children, who have it, besides, for next to nothing. So we may reckon on Goody Green, her girl, whose settlement is certainly here, and the whole batch of grand-children, including a sickly boy:—a rare discovery you have made for us, Mr. Stratton!"

"I have sprung the game to be sure: and now suppose I wing them all into another parish, what will you say?"

"That it's the best of many good turns you have done us," answered Miles, with a bow: "and moreover that if any living man can do it, Mr. Stratton is the gentleman."

"Well, take no notice; time will show."

When evening came, it found the cottagers seated in their snug kitchen. The widow was busy at her wheel, Helen manufacturing a suit for Willy, out of one that had done good service to James; Mary knitting; James watching the simmerings of his supper, the ingredients for which cross Mr. Buckle had not neglected to supply; and Willy, with no small satisfaction, reciting to Mrs. Barker a hymn that she had desired him to learn. Richard's arrival completed the party: and the story of his interview with the great

men, and their condescending inquiries, was eagerly listened to by all. "How very kind of the gentlemen to take such an interest in us," observed the widow, whose guileless character rendered her unsuspecting of evil. "I wish old Buckle had been there," cried Mary. "Did they make any particular inquiries about me?" demanded Mrs. Barker; and the toss of the head that ensued on hearing Richard's reluctant negative, bespoke a sense of offended dignity; while James remarked, "I wonder you weren't too dashed to speak."

Helen was silent: Richard had passed very delicately over the part relating to her, merely repeating the question as to her place of birth; but she felt a sort of boding uneasiness at heart, probably from her really reflective mind catching at the obvious tendency of the examination pursued. Mrs. Barker looked at her for a moment, and exclaimed, "I shouldn't wonder"—then suddenly checking herself, shook her head, and finished by muttering in a mysterious tone a soliloquy not new from her lips; "I know the ways of the parish pretty well."

Prayer closed, as it had commenced, the peaceful and industrious day; and when the widow Green had paid a t'potee visit to each simple couch, to ascertain that all was comfortable, with a special reference to that of the sickly boy, she knelt down alone, to commend anew herself and her precious charges to him who is the God of the widow, the Father of the fatherless, and who had promised that in answer to the prayer of faith he would guide her with his counsel here, and afterward receive her to glory.

Two months glided on, without any material change in the affairs of our cottagers; but the blasts of winter that stripped the trees of their few remaining leaves, and dashed the foam of ocean over the cliffs, bearing it even to the humble roofs that stood sheltered on their western side, proved too severe for Hewitt. He was given over; and every post might be expected to convey the tidings that William Green's cottage had lapsed to the landlord. Many shared in the concern expressed by the neighbours for the result of an application which the kind clergyman had promised to make to the land

ord; and in the discomfiture occasioned by the short reply, containing merely a reference to the agent, as being empowered to arrange all such matters in that quarter. This functionary being immediately, but privately applied to by Mr. Barlow, frankly told him that the rent thenceforth to be demanded was so entirely beyond the poor widow's means, that he had felt at liberty to promise a new lease to one who had closed with his terms. The clergyman wisely refrained from communicating this to the family, while as yet the life remained; but secretly busied himself in devising plans for their future support.

One Saturday morning, while the widow Green was occupied in scouring up her house, assisted by Helen, two gentlemen tapped at the door. On their entrance, Mr. Stratton was recognized: the other was a stranger. A respectful reception, and ready answers to some general inquiries having been given, the visitors seated themselves, Mr. Stratton insisting that the widow should do the same, and desiring Helen to continue her employment. He then proceeded:

"There is much kind feeling excited on your behalf, my good woman; matters look very unpromising as to your lease; and I suppose you are prepared for the worst."

A slight quiver passed over the widow's lip, as she replied, "I trust, sir, that He who orders all things for us, will give us grace to receive it thankfully at his hand: whether it may be what we call good, or what we call evil."

"Very right: a truly religious person like you can never be cast down by a change in outward affairs; particularly when, as you seem to say, what we call evil may turn out to be really for our good."

"That is true enough," said his companion, "as many can testify."

"This gentleman," continued Mr. Stratton, "is a friend of mine, passing through our p.ace. He comes from a distant town where there are hundreds of families, led by different circumstances to settle there, all of whom are now thankful enough for any event that helped to fix them in such a prosperous place."

The widow glanced around her, and

towards the pretty little window which commanded a wide prospect.

"I understand your feelings," resumed her friend; "it is very hard to leave a spot we have been attached to for years, and break up old ties; but, I doubt not, any tie would be easier for you to break than the one binding you to the children to whom you have been both mother and father these many years."

"It is true, sir," answered the poor woman: "the worst pain that ever smites me is when I think we may be parted and scattered abroad—and they so young!"

"And you in the decline of life, and likely soon to be wanting the comfort from them that they have found you so ready to impart," added Mr. Stratton, looking towards Helen, who was leaning on the dresser with her face concealed.

"I do hope, I do trust," cried the poor widow, while her tears burst forth, "that it may please the Lord, in his goodness, to order it so as not to part us yet."

Mr. Stratton nodded to his companion, who, drawing his chair nearer to her, began: "That is what we have been considering of, my good lady. You must know, the town where I live is one of the first places in England for furnishing good, healthful, profitable employment for industrious people, from those of your own age down to the small children, whose little nimble fingers get so expert at the easy tasks given to them, that if you happened to have a little boy even of seven years old, he would make a good round sum at the week's end by his own work—or play, you may almost call it."

"What work may it be, sir?"

"Different sorts: you see we are great manufacturers, and have a vast deal of employment to give—so we had need, for the crowds who come begging for a share in it would distract us, if we had not. As it is, the numbers who are sent away make it a difficult thing to get; but I being able to influence the gentlemen, can always secure a person against disappointment, and get you all into a capital mill."

"Is it the factories?" said the widow, starting.

"I don't wonder at your being surprised to hear you may be certain of employment," replied the other: "but depend on it I shan't deceive you."

"I have heard much about the factories, sir, but little enough in their favour."

"To be sure," observed Mr. Stratton, laughing. "Those who succeed, settle there, and are too well engaged to run about gossiping; while the disappointed folks spread far and wide, proclaiming like the fox in the fable, how very sour are the grapes they could not reach."

"That may be," remarked the widow thoughtfully.

"It is, I assure you," said the stranger. "Those who are lucky enough to get fully engaged soon come to live like gentlemen. Good lodging, capital clothing, the best to eat, and plenty of it: kind neighbours, generous masters, skilful doctors"—

"And fine preachers," added Mr. Stratton.

"Oh, for those that like fine preaching it is as good as London itself: lots of Bible Societies, missionary meetings, tract depositories."—

"And schools?" asked the widow anxiously.

"Capital schools: day, evening and Sunday schools to no end."

"We cannot stop long now," observed Mr. Stratton. "Think over what you have heard, but don't mention a word of it to anybody at present. In the first place, my friend would be exposed to so many applications he might not be able to serve you effectually; and in the next place, the life in the lease has not yet expired: so you have a chance still."

"I will not mention it, sir; unless to Mr. Barlow, who is always my true friend."

"Mr. Barlow! oh, no by no means: he is the best man alive, and your friend; but then he is other people's friend too. Come, I have good reason for desiring you to promise you won't name the matter to any body till we talk it over again."

The widow promised: adding that she would answer for Helen too.

"Come here, Helen," said the kind neighbour, "Why you are grown quite a woman. Don't you think it would be a nice plan to stop with your good old friend, instead of going out to all sorts of drudgery?"

"Indeed, sir, I should not mind drudgery: but I could not part with *her*," casting her tearful eyes towards the old lady.

"Nor need you," said the stranger; "a

strong healthy girl like you may earn enough, and easily, to keep her old hands both quiet and warm. Good bye to you." And the gentlemen departed.

"Why did you not tell them, granny," said Helen, when the visitors had left the cottage, "that you had relations in the factories?"

"It would have done no good, my dear; and indeed I wanted to have their own account of the matter: for I often thought my daughter Wright had a little overrated the comforts of the place, because she went against the judgment of her friends; and she is one of those, Helen, who don't like to own they are disappointed."

"But what a fine thing it must be, if all this is true."

"It isn't all true, to my knowledge; but the Parliament has been making new laws they say, and all for the benefit of the working people: so it may be truer than I thought at first. Well, we must wait, and see how things turn out, Helen. A higher hand than ours is overruling all for good."

They resumed their employments; and on the morrow the young people attended the Sunday school, with faces as cheerful and hearts as light, as any in the village. Helen taught her class, Richard his, and the three children, as usual, gave perfect satisfaction to their instructors. From the school they went in modest order to the church, where the widow Green was already in her place. They had proceeded but a few paces homeward, after the service, when a deep toll of the large bell struck them with a startling effect: they paused involuntarily.

"Poor Hewitt!" remarked a gentleman who was passing, "when did he die?"

"I don't know: I heard yesterday that he could not live many hours."

Another step or two brought the party painfully interested in these tidings within a few feet of the humble mound, over which a neat wooden grave-rail extended, bearing the names of William and Sarah Green and their departed children. It was almost too much for the widow; the cottage rose up before her, with all its sad and sweet associations; the past and the future blending with the present, in a way they had never done before. She leaned more heavily on her grandson's arm; and

as with affectionate sympathy he pressed hers closer to his side, a sob—a sound not often heard from her patient lips—burst forth, and then the natural weakness of humanity was conquered by a sweet recurrence to her mind of the words she had just before heard quoted in the pulpit: “Be still, and know that I am God.”

Nothing was said on the subject: Richard fully understood the extent of what had befallen them; but he was a boy alike of resolute spirit and of sanguine disposition. The burden that then hung on his arm was dear to him as his life; and in deep devotion of soul he entered on the new path of duty into which the funeral bell had ushered him, determining that while he had hands to work, neither the aged form beside him nor the youthful beings who followed their tread should know want or sorrow. The untried path presented no obstacles to his inexperienced eye; and if Richard grieved over the loss of his little patrimony, still more did he rejoice in the conscious acquisition of what was indisputably his own—useful information, industrious habits, and an unblemished character.

At the cottage door they were met by Mrs. Barker, who, with a face where concern was most legibly pictured, took the widow's hand, saying, “If I could save you from what's now likely to come upon you, by walking fifty miles on my bare feet, I'd set out this minute.”

“That you would, ma'am,” exclaimed more than one young voice: while the widow mildly said, “I know I have a kind, true friend on earth as long as Mrs. Barker is there: but now will you please to defer all talk about these things till to-morrow. We must remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy; and for all the rest, ‘the Lord will provide.’”

No word of allusion to the event was heard during the remainder of the day: all was cheerfulness, though perhaps not so bright as at some other times. The lodger's studious attentions, her many little bustling kindnesses, and looks of anxious love, tended to keep the matter very distinctly present to their thoughts; and once or twice she so far forgot herself as to mutter expressions of admiration, the origin of which none could mistake, who knew the circumstances of the case.

“What a difference there is between Mrs. Barker and cross old Buckle!” whispered Mary to Helen. But the next morning when the pail of milk was handed in, cross old Buckle spoke in tones so gentle, and stroked her head so kindly, and slipped so bright a shilling into her hand, that Mary's opinion was quite staggered: tripping backward, as usual, in Helen's path, she exclaimed, “I say, Helen, it is a good thing to be poor and in trouble: every body does be so kind to one then,”

Alas, poor Mary! she had much to learn.

CHAPTER III.

THE MIGRATION.

AT the noon-tide hour, Mr. Stratton again appeared, with his friend; and after expressing regret at the recent event, said, “I am to much hurried to stop now: but to prove to you that the advice we gave is good, my friend has brought a pamphlet, printed and published, giving an account of the matter. Read it carefully, and keep your promise of saying nothing, till we see you again.”

Mrs. Green needed no inducement to read it carefully; she was wavering on a point of the deepest importance to her and hers: and though clinging to a faint hope of the renewal, until she should hear from Mr. Barlow the result of his visit to the agent, she pondered as inevitable the alternative of dispersion, or migration to the factories. The pamphlet was soon read: it set forth in glowing colours the comfort, the abundance, the independence of those who engaged in the work, fully bearing out her informant in his largest statements. Could she reject such evidence! No, it would have seemed too much like spurning from her an advantage providentially placed within her grasp; and she only regretted on seeing the clergyman approach, that she was not at liberty to communicate to him her bright prospects.

Mr. Barlow's entrance, however, recalled too vividly the comforts of past days

and awoke her too painfully to present difficulties, to be hailed without strong emotion. He took her hand with a look that prepared her for the worst, and said, "Among all earthly changes, how increasingly precious is the word that assures the believer he has 'a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'"

"It is, it is," replied the widow, wringing her hands; "but oh, sir, the four walls of this poor cottage have been a home on earth to me that I feel it hard to leave."

"I know it: the hardest lesson we have to learn is that which convinces us we are strangers and sojourners—pilgrims seeking a better country. Gladly indeed should I have been the bearer of a message that would leave you yet awhile in this quiet retreat: but"—he hesitated.

"We must leave it, sir?"

"I urged the case strongly; I even ventured to promise an increase of rent on your part, but in vain: another applicant had secured the reversion. Let us now consider in what way we can promote your interests, and those of the dear children."

"Not yet, sir, if you please."

In vain did the good clergyman remonstrate, telling her he must leave home for some days, and that every hour was precious: she repeated that she would talk it over with him when she saw him again. Reluctantly he quitted the subject; and after much good counsel and scriptural consolation under approaching trials, with fervent prayer, he rose to depart; but turning to the door, said, "Take a caution, Mrs. Green, from a sincere friend: I know you may be exposed to some inducements to venture on a hasty step before my return: Do not suffer yourself to be tempted by any show of advantage, into the manufacturing districts. Remember my words, and be wary."

The widow longed to call him back, and to tell all; but her promise must be kept, and the opportunity was gone. In the evening, Mrs. Barker eagerly began on the same subject, and was not a little mortified at meeting a similar repulse. After many attempts at eliciting some information, she drew herself up, saying, "I might take offence at your being so close with an old friend; but no doubt you have

your reasons. And I wish," she added with sudden vivacity, "I wish that old fox Stratton, who was about here, has not been setting some trap for you—p'rhaps the factories!"

The widow's countenance changed a little, and Helen coloured just because she hoped she should not colour at that moment.

"Oh, I see how it is," cried the lodger triumphantly: "I was right; but surely, dame Green, you arn't such a simpleton as to be gulled by them who are only afraid you should be a burden to them, coming, with this large family, on the parish."

"The parish!" exclaimed Richard in the most angry tone that he had ever been known to utter.

"Ay, boy, the parish: don't you see, if any thing ailed your grandmother or the little ones, though you and Helen might be lucky enough to get a service, you couldn't maintain them; and what must it all come to but that? Oh, I haven't been a beadle's wife and his widow too, for nothing: I know something of the ways of the parish."

"Mrs. Barker, ma'am," said Richard, rising and standing as tall as he could, "there is nobody, next to my grandmother, I respect so much as yourself, ma'am: but as long as this roof is over our heads, ay, and as long as these two hands have strength to dig, I do hope, ma'am, you will never hurt our feelings again, by speaking as if any of my family could go on the parish." And out he walked with a swelling heart.

"As fine a boy as ever trod on shoe-leather," observed Mrs. Barker: "but he is not up to these things. And as for his two hands, and his digging—well, I'll say no more; only don't let yourself be fooled, Molly Green, by them that care less for you than for the saving of a farthing's worth of musty meal."

This discussion produced its effect on the widow; but not such as was desired by her two disinterested advisers. The idea of becoming a parish pauper had scarcely occurred to her; but now the thing was presented in a nearer point of view than she could well bear to contemplate. It appeared likely enough that Mr. Stratton was actuated by the motives at-

tributed to him ; but his friend was unconnected with the place ; and then the pamphlet ! *That* would not have been written and printed to deceive her. The contrast was strong : on the one hand pauperism, or, at the very best, a complete separation of the family : on the other, a home, lucrative employment, independence, respectability, all the advantages that schools for the children, and abundant spiritual privileges for them and herself could impart. Besides, her daughter had long been a resident in that very town ; and would now, no doubt, be glad to renew the intercourse with a mother whom she had first disobeyed, then slighted, and reproached with undue partiality for William's family. It was too delightful a prospect to be relinquished : her resolution was formed ; and on the very next day she announced it to her friend Mr. Stratton, who promised to see an agreement entered into with one of the first mill-owners in the town, and to make all requisite arrangements for their removal.

When Mr. Barlow returned, he found things too far gone for his interference.— He therefore contented himself with rescuing Richard from the fate of the others, by providing him with a situation where he would enjoy means of improvement with the prospect of a good business, if he proved diligent and pains-taking ; and with a heavy heart he bestowed his parting benediction on the assembled household the evening preceding their outset. The scene was so changed that a stranger would not have recognized Green's cottage, in the comfortless, bare walls of the all but deserted mansion. A sale had taken place that morning, comprising the whole of its simple furniture, save a few cherished articles of small intrinsic value, committed to the care of a kind neighbour ; and two flock-beds, with their accompaniments of blankets and bedding, which the widow had agreed with the boatman to convey as luggage, for their passage was to be by canal. These lay closely packed, furnishing seats for the party, who were never, never more to assemble in that humble but beloved abode ; and who might now be said to mourn each apart, over come secret sorrow with which a stranger could not intermeddle. There are seasons when the nearest, the dearest, the most

trusted of bosom friends, is comparatively a stranger : there are depths of feeling, and mazes of thought not to be explored by human eye : throbs of secret anguish beyond the alleviation of human sympathy. Alone man enters the world ; alone he must launch forth upon eternity ; and between the two periods there is many a moment when, despite himself, man is compelled to feel what it is to be utterly alone.

The young children had indulged in many delightful anticipations of the wonders that they were to behold in a great town ; but these they had only whispered among themselves, since the little sale of household stuff commenced ; for even Willy could enter somewhat into the struggle that was evidently trying the elder portion of the family. They had all felt the parting with Mrs. Barker ; and some of her commiserating expressions, as she stroked their heads and patted their cheeks, had excited a misgiving that partially clouded their gay dreams with a vague foreboding of some unknown evil. James grew languid from fatigue ; Mary had an uneasy apprehension of rivalry in the affection of her friends among new claimants, and all were deeply grieved at the prospect of leaving Richard. His were feelings of no common poignancy ; for, in persuading him to remain, seeking independence for himself in that rural district, Mr. Barlow had dropped some hints with respect to the injurious effect of factory employment on the health and characters of the rest, which, while they confirmed him in his path of duty, gave rise to more distressing apprehensions than the good minister would willingly have excited. He did not know how far the boy's mind had outgrown his years. Helen's indeed appeared an easier choice ; for the only road that seemed open to her was one which kept her beside her benefactress, holding out a fair prospect of repaying to the family some part of her obligation ; but her young heart had so entwined itself round the objects familiar from infancy, that the breaking up of the little establishment, the removal of each article as it passed into the hands of a purchaser, and the consciousness that in a few hours she must forever quit that peaceful home, would have been a heavy

grief, even had she not imbibed a secret dread of the untried experiment, and shrunk from what her own fancy, far as it fell below the reality, would picture of the noise, the confusion, and other painful contrasts of a large town.

But none suffered like the widow: she had her portion of what each around her felt, and with it a depressing apprehension that she had acted wrong in preferring the counsel of worldly advisers before that of her long-tried, pious friend. It is no uncommon case to seek direction in prayer, and then to act from the impulse of our own choice, without waiting for an answer. Of selfishness in any shape she stood acquitted, even in her own eyes; but not so of precipitation. She was, in fact, one among many victims to a most nefarious device: the waste of human life in the factories, like that in the plantations of the west, occasions so depressing a demand for a supply of new labourers, that it gives rise to a traffic not very dissimilar from the slave trade. A brisk market is always open; and those who consider it a meritorious work to decrease the burdens of their respective parishes at any cost, are equally ready to recruit it with their paupers, as the natives of Madagascar of old were to sell their prisoners. Even where no such desire exists among parochial authorities, emissaries are employed, who, by means of such false representations as those contained in the pamphlet shown to the widow, written and published for that express purpose, allure the industrious countryman from his healthful sphere, to perish, with his little ones, amid the noxious exhalations of those unnatural dens. It is no fiction that such books are circulated in districts remote from the scenes described in them; or that they often prevail when other means would not succeed.

But the die was cast, the cottage was dismantled, and the little party who sat grouped on the large bundle were to know their place within its walls no more. Evening was closing; a bright moon had surmounted the tops of the old elms that separated two adjoining fields, and looked in, as if for a farewell greeting, through the interstices of a woodbine, that had been carefully trained over the casement, and formed a grateful lattice. Mary broke the long silence.

"Our poor honeysuckle! I do hope whoever gets the place will take care of the honeysuckle."

"Ah," sighed Richard, "many a pleasant hour I have passed, training and trimming that old plant. Some hand will cut it down before long."

"Never mind," said James, "I'll have one just like it growing over our window at M. It will make us more happy."

Tears sprang into Helen's eye at the contrast thus forced upon her of the future with the past. The widow felt it also, and remarked, "We are not going to a place of ease and enjoyment, my dear; but to labour for a living in a very different situation. The only thing we can promise ourselves there, of all that has made us so happy here, is the presence of God." Then clasping her hands, and looking up with a burst of tears, she exclaimed, "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence!"

"The answer to that prayer, granny," said Richard, "is very gracious: 'My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.' Honeysuckles on the window there may not be; but the sweet moonlight will come through, and remind you of what Mr. Barlow said last Sunday, when he preached on the light shining in a dark place. One thing, I am sure, you will carry away with you, that has helped more than anything else to make us happy here, and that is the old bible, granny." The boy turned away to hide his tears, overpowered by the thought that he must no more listen to the sacred book in the midst of those he loved so well.

The moonbeam, now broad and strong, fell upon them as they sat, and bathed them in its silvery light, passing through the pure clear atmosphere peculiar to a healthful sea-coast. They looked upon each other, and again to the fair orb, while the natural thought so beautifully expressed by the poet, seemed spontaneously to arise in their comparatively uncultivated minds, that it would be a sort of rallying point for their fond gaze, when widely severed in place and circumstance. After a silence of some minutes, the widow called on Helen to repeat the twenty-third psalm; and never had the preciousness of its soothing assurance so commended itself to their hearts, as while in

the low deliberate accents of deep feeling, each clause fell from her quivering lip. They then kneeled down, and fervent, though broken by many sobs, was the prayer of that fond parent as she commended the children of her anxious love, together with herself, into the hands of Him who is a Father to the fatherless, and a judge of the widow, in his holy habitation. Oh, it is an awful thought that so many believing, confiding prayers of the poor destitute are recorded in the book of His remembrance, whose piercing eye is never for one moment averted from the hidden plannings of the mercenary deceiver's heart! Very terrible will be the day of public inquisition and divine retribution. God keeps silence now: the oppressor secretly flatters his own soul that the Lord is even such a one as himself: and the sufferer is tempted to ask "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?—is his promise come utterly to an end?" No: he hath appointed a day for the open vindication alike of his justice and his faithfulness—a day that both shall see, when, in the presence of men, of angels, and of devils, it shall be shown that the Judge of all the earth doeth right.

The little family, so barbarously exiled from their industrious home, to avert a possible, a paltry burden from the parish books, and so craftily ensnared into lingering destruction to swell the gains of a wealthy manufacturer, arose from their knees, exchanged one parting embrace in silence, under the subduing influence which they had just besought, and presently separated for the night. Richard, after accompanying the travellers to the doors of two neighbouring cottages, where beds were hospitably prepared for their few hours' rest, returned to fling himself upon the bundle, in the agony of a sorrow no longer to be repressed; and the moon had stolen her soft beam away from the little casement, ere the boy had wept himself to sleep.

We will not accompany the wanderers through every stage of their progress: an agreement had indeed been made with the barge-owner, to whose charge they were committed; but abundant opportunity was left for him to advance demands alike unexpected and unreasonable. It was a sad specimen of what they might look for

among mercenary strangers; but even the imposition which pressed so heavily on their very slender purse was less galling than the coarse familiarity and contemptuous rudeness alternately exhibited towards them. Disrespect was new to the Widow Green: the independence both of her disposition and circumstances, together with her exemplary line of conduct towards the helpless young charges who shared her generous care, had imparted a moral elevation to her character, demanding and receiving the homage of a general deference from her equals, with more than common courtesy on the part of those above her. She was now to learn the value of an humbling dispensation; and in the pain inflicted by it, she first discovered how needful it was. There are corruptions in every human heart, hidden even from the knowledge of its possessor, until particular circumstances are so ordered as to bring them forth to his view. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults," is the aspiration of many a Christian who little thinks what a startling process will commence in answer to his prayer.

Helen Fleetwood was a girl of delicate mind, such as is often found in our sequestered villages, under the guardianship of watchful prudence, more especially when influenced by early, simple piety. There was nothing in her character unusually elevated above the class to which she belonged; but it owed something of its finer texture to the scenery of her native place, and its association with a tale of infant bereavement, of parental sorrow, that she indeed could scarcely remember, but which had often been related to her with touching pathos, though in homely phrase, by the fishermen's families around. By brooding on these, as she marked the rolling of the billows that had once engulfed her father, she acquired a more contemplative, and perhaps a more imaginative turn of thought than most of her young companions, while a modest reluctance to make her own concerns more prominent than was suitable for so humble a person habituated her to what Mary termed keeping her own counsel. Often did the curious, loquacious little girl devote her ingenuity to the task of discovering some of Helen's "plots" for cutting out a pina-

fore to the best advantage in point of saving, or reclaiming some square foot of waste ground for a plantation of herbs. Helen, in truth, had no mystery about her: she was rather reserved; but Mary was an indefatigable hunter after the marvellous, and not always to be convinced by the evidence of her own senses, that she was capable of a mistake.

Whatever in Helen's character partook of noble and generous—and there was very much of both—was now brought into full exercise. She felt with poignancy the rudeness of various kinds to which she was, for the first time in her life, subjected; and once or twice she was about to complain to her natural friend of the coarse language uttered in her hearing; but a glance at the widow's care-worn countenance, with the consciousness that she was now scarcely less helpless than herself, silenced the girl. She only kept nearer to her side, and strove by talking in a louder and more cheerful tone than usual to withdraw the attention of her little party from many things unfit to hear. One of the men, struck by her conduct, swore she was an honest, good girl; wished his little Sally might grow up like her, and restrained his comrades from farther profanity and rude jesting. Helen secretly thanked the Giver of all wisdom for guiding her to such a course; and prayed for a more abundant supply according to his precious promise, that to such as ask he will give liberally and upbraid not.

The passage was long, tedious, uncomfortable, and attended with serious loss to their finances; but no remedy could be obtained; and with a heavy heart the widow released her bedding from the master, who threatened to seize it, if his exorbitant demands were not satisfied. They left the barge, and all other feelings were soon absorbed in wonder at the size of the town, and the extreme length, narrowness, and filth of the street, or rather alley, where they were directed to find Mrs. Wright. Above all annoyances, the oppressive weight of the atmosphere was felt and complained of by each; but far more sickening was the air of the low court into which they turned previous to entering Mrs. Wright's abode.

They were kindly welcomed by this daughter of the Widow Green, who struck

Helen as being altogether the most unlike her mother of any person she had beheld: as dissimilar, in fact, as the apartment they had entered was to the cottage they had left. Here, on dusky walls, stained with every variety of sombre discoloration, were stuck a number of the most tawdry prints, evidently quite fresh, and placed there for a particular display: the window, incapable as it was of admitting much light under the best circumstances, was rendered opaque by dirt, and festooned with cobwebs; yet a struggle to look fine was manifest throughout the whole establishment, including the mistress, who, though she had not combed out her matted locks, had surmounted them with a cap of unusual form, decorated with showy ribbons. Of ornaments there was no lack, but of neatness, cleanliness, comfort, respectability, nothing relieved the eye: above all, it wanted cheerfulness.

After the first affectionate greeting, and some tears shed on the cheek of her long-absent daughter, the widow kindly enquired for the rest of her family.

"The children won't be in till after dusk," replied Mrs. Wright; "and as for their father he will come about the same time."

Some arrangements were then made: an inner room, intolerably close to be sure, but rather cleaner than the other, was pointed out for their temporary use. Here they were to remain until a suitable lodging was found after being installed in their new situations. By the time their bedding was unpacked, and their personal neatness improved after the fatiguing journey, evening was come; and the village party returned to the parlour, as Mrs. Wright had called it, just as her family entered it from the street.

There was a pause—almost a movement of recoil on the widow's part, as this group of her grand-children met her view; while a hasty glance of involuntary comparison bespoke the mother's consciousness of a contrast such as words can but faintly pourtray. Stepping between them, she hastily remarked, "It is well for the children that poor William fancied a country life; for to be sure it does make them look more fresh and healthy, though town-bred young people may be ever so much genteeler."

CHAPTER IV.

NEARER APPROACH.

LET no one suppose we are going to write fiction, or to conjure up phantoms of a heated imagination, to aid the cause which we avowedly embrace. Names may be altered, characters may be grouped, with some latitude of license; but not an incident shall be coined to serve the purpose, however good, so far as relates to the main subject—that is, to the factories of this, our free and happy England. Vivid indeed, and fertile in devices must the fancy be that could invent a horror beyond the bare, every-day reality of the thing! Nay, we will set forth nothing but what has been stated on oath, corroborated on oath, and on oath confirmed beyond the possibility of an evasive question. Neither will we lift the veil that piety and modesty would draw over the hidden atrocities of this diabolical child-market. Blasphemy and indecency may, they do abound, turning every mill into a pandemonium; but it is not needful to sully our pages with either. We will exhibit the tree, we will analyze the soil where it grows, the elements that nourish, the hands that culture it, and the fruit which it ultimately produces; but the secret circulation of its poisonous sap we will not so bare as to contaminate the mind of a youthful reader, or to harrow up the soul of any one. Let the pestilence preserve the cloud of darkness in which it walks; we only desire to show the withered remains of its poor blighted victims.

The group that entered Mrs. Wright's dwelling and whom their mother's instinctive movement had partially screened from view while she uttered her deprecating remark, quickly drew round the table, and commenced an eager attack on the provisions before them. It consisted of three children, a girl and two boys, at whose ages it was impossible to guess with any hope of accuracy. Little difference appeared in their height as they sat, the tallest not exceeding that of Mary Green; but the stoop of his projecting head, the retiring curve of his chest, and the disproportionate length of his arms, betrayed a deficiency or a perversion of natural growth,

which was farther confirmed by the very settled expression of a countenance by no means prepossessing. Next to him, in stature and in place, sat a comparatively stout and straight little fellow, but with an aspect so vacant, so stupified, that he seemed to be under the influence of a powerful narcotic. The third was the spectre of a very pretty girl, whose naked arms resembled ivory wands rather than limbs of natural flesh and blood, while her hair, black as the raven's wing, thin as the gossamer thread, thrown back from her temples, and falling, or rather floating down to her very narrow shoulders, set off the deadly white of her complexion with such effect that she seemed like one in whose veins the current of life had already ceased to circulate. The eyes, generally downcast, were shaded by deep, silken lashes; but when raised, the broad, unflinching stare of the girl was oppressive. Helen, who, sitting opposite, had fixed a look of interest on her, encountered one of these sudden gazes, and shrank before it, with an undefined sensation of alarm.

Meanwhile Mrs. Wright sustained a voluble part, plying her mother with questions, and interrupting her answers with much irrelevant matter. At length the old lady seized an interval to ask, "Where is Phœbe, your eldest?"

"There," replied her daughter, pointing to the dark-haired girl, "that's Phœbe."

"I—, I believe I have made a mistake; it was Sarah I meant to inquire for."

"She is not at home just now," said Mrs. Wright, colouring a little, "you will see her by and by;" then added, "this is Charles, and the little one is John."

"And the other three?" Mrs. Wright shook her head, and lifted the corner of her apron to her eyes; while Charles with a shrug, said abruptly, "All gone, grandmother; dead all five of them; and a happy deliverance it was."

"Heaven is better than earth," ejaculated the mother, raising her eyes.

"A glance that passed between Charles and Phœbe at these words, a suppressed grin on the face of the former, and a side-long look of scorn from his sister, excited the astonishment of their cousins, and increased Helen's uneasiness. The widow did not perceive it: she was painfully recalling some statements in her daughter's

letters now clearly shown to have been wilfully false. Wright's entrance proved a seasonable interruption, and his cordial greeting a contrast to the heartless scene.

"My good mother," he said, affectionately saluting her, "it is many a long year since we met, and bravely you seem to have weathered it. Young people, you are kindly welcome all. Why, so many rosy cheeks are like a flower-show in the town of M." He passed his eye from them to his own children, and compressing his lips, as if to stifle a sigh, sat down.

By this time, Johnny's evident drowsiness had so increased, that his head fell upon his brother's shoulder, who, with a rough push, sent it back against Phoebe: her shrill scolding exclamation half waked the poor boy, and with an unintelligible mutter he rose to stagger towards a press-bed, turned up against the wall. His mother loudly called on him to return; but the father, saying, "Poor fellow, let him rest a while," rose and let down the untidy couch, on which he instantly flung himself.

"Is he ill?" asked James, in a half whisper.

"Not he," replied Charles; "'tis seldom he keeps awake so long." He rose as he spoke, or rather stood; for no perceptible difference was made in his height by the change of position, owing to the curvature of his legs. The deformity was striking, and the irregular shuffle with which he crossed the room painful to witness. The widow averted her eyes, and hastily inquired of Wright whether he knew the cotton mill of the Messrs. Z——.

"Of course I do, for my children work there, but ——"

"Never mind his buts, mother," interrupted the wife, "he is famous for them."

"I have a letter of recommendation to that firm," resumed Mrs. Green; "and tomorrow I wished to deliver it, as Mr. Stratton charged me to avoid delay; yet I should like to make a few inquiries beforehand." In fact, the discovery of her other grandchildren being employed in it was the reverse of an inducement to place their cousins there.

"Take my advice," said Wright, "if you have a good word spoken for you to any mill-owner, act upon it. You'll soon learn the value of a friend at the head."

The widow could not but acquiesce in this; and when the family party broke up, with a prayerless, cold good night, she in their own apartment commended her little flock to the covenanted mercies of God in Christ Jesus, and soon saw the three younger ones in a sound sleep. Helen, however, had never felt more wakeful; anxious thoughts were crowding on her mind. When all was hushed save the brawling voices and rattling wheels that seemed interminably to distract the streets, she gave utterance to her feelings.

"Granny, this place is very different from the quiet home we have left; and the people we saw on our way are very different, too, from our old neighbours. What a comfort it is to know that the best friend of all is with us here as much as in our own home, though we cannot see Him!"

"A comfort indeed, dear child: and we shall need it more and more to uphold us now. I fear we have a thorny path before us!"

"Never mind that, so long as it is the right path; you know who has said, 'The way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein.'"

"And how are we to know, Helen, that we are in the right path?"

"I think, Granny, while we are striving to do our duty in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call us, and are looking to him for help and strength, and trying to confess the Lord Jesus Christ before men, both with our lips and in our lives, that we may hope we are not out of the good way."

"And do you think, Helen, you shall be able to do this, if you get among bad people who try to tempt you to wickedness; and to laugh you out of your religion?"

"Indeed I don't know: there is nothing good in me, and I seem to tremble when I look forward. Now, Granny, will you pray with me, that the Lord God may be to us, as He has promised to be to his people, a Father of the fatherless, and a Husband to the widow?"

The prayer was immediately offered, amid many tears and sighs; for both were oppressed with a weight that they knew not how to sustain, except by casting the burden on the Lord.

When they rose, the poor old woman

tenderly embraced her orphan charge, and blessed her for leading her to that most comforting refuge. Helen answered,

"The truth is, dear Granny, I have always thought more than I spoke; but now I see you are likely to have many difficulties and few helps, I desire to be, after my poor fashion, more useful to you; and I want to get over my unwillingness to speak out. Oh, my mother," she added, with a fresh burst of tears, "I fear we are come to a bad place, and these poor little lambs"—she could not go on.

"Tell me, what have you seen or heard to cause such alarm?"

"Not much; but two or three things passed that distressed me. Phœbe, who is, as you first thought, the eldest, and two years older than me, though she is so little, said that Mary might be passed, with the doctor's help, for thirteen, and Willy for more than nine, and so get higher wages. When I told her it would be an untruth to say they were more than eleven and eight, she and her brother made quite a mock of me, saying nobody minded such nonsense here; and then they told me some cases of such wicked deceit, that it frightened me to hear of them. They laughed the more at me; and said you would soon learn, like others, to make the best bargain you could of the children."

"What else, Helen?" exclaimed the widow, who saw she hesitated here. "Tell me all, my child; for it is of great importance I should know it now."

"I thought so, Granny: or I would never have been a tell-tale, to grieve you, and to expose these poor young people. They informed me that their sister Sarah, whom you were asking for, was made as they said, too good a bargain of; and that from early over-work in the mill, bad treatment, and other injuries—they did not say what—she is such an object that her mother kept her out of our sight. She is up stairs in a little loft, not likely to live long. All the others died of early consumption."

The widow was petrified at a tale which, in addition to its other horrors, proved her daughter to have been guilty of the most systematic falsehood. Helen resumed:

"From all they said, I feared it was likely you might be deceived into making some agreement that you would afterwards be sorry for: therefore I tell you

now. I think, Granny, you had better take us to the gentleman you have the letter to, rather than a stranger." Then, seeing the deep grief and alarm depicted on her friend's countenance, she added, "You know, all Christ's people must bear a cross; and really we have had none to bear, we have been so happy and prosperous. So it is reasonable to expect it now. Besides, is it not a mercy to be forewarned?"

Again the poor widow thanked her young counsellor; who, smiling through tears, said, "I have often prayed that your kindness to me, a friendless child, might be like bread cast on the waters to be found again after many days; but as yet I have done nothing for you, my own dear Granny."

They went to rest; and at an hour much earlier than even their usual habits had accustomed them to awake at, they were startled from repose by the ringing of a large bell, followed by the shrill tones of Mrs. Wright in the adjoining room, calling on her children to "get up and be off." It evidently required some rough persuasion to divorce Johnny from his bed; and a blow, followed by an angry cry, was heard. After the lapse of a very few minutes, the door slammed after the departing trio, who were evidently sent forth fasting. As for any morning devotion, it was but too plain that such a thing was wholly incompatible with the habits and feelings of the family. In one point of view, this rather calmed the widow's rising apprehensions; she knew that wherever the tree is evil the fruit must be so too; and she strove to persuade herself that what this household were in the town of M— they would have been in her own peaceful villiage, or in any other place. Resolving, therefore, to be so guarded in her proceedings as to avoid any trap that might be laid, she strove to picture to herself a scene of piety, peace and comfort, when her dear children were once finally engaged in the work which she resolved should be rather below than above their years and capabilities. Mr. Stratton's letter was her sheet anchor; for even if he did wish to separate them from the parish it was manifestly his interest to make such absence agreeable to them; and so to prevent their return. Thus she

reasoned with herself; and rose with a somewhat lightened spirit.

Not so Helen; she had a presentiment of evil, as it seemed. In reality it was only the effect of her natural sagacity drawing plain conclusions from obvious premises. *The boatmen on the canal had dropped hints of which all that she had yet seen were explanatory; the aspect of the town classes where she had passed along, the demeanour of Mrs. Wright, the appearance, manners and communications of her elder children, with what she had overheard of the rousing scene that morning, all combined with her deep mistrust of Mr. Stratton, and the anxious warnings of the good clergyman to prepare her for bitter trials. Yet it was not for herself that Helen trembled; her fervent love for the companions of her childhood—the tenderness with which her bosom yearned towards them on the approach of even the lightest calamity, and the consciousness of their truly helpless state in the midst of a callous population where they had not one friend—for she could not concede that sacred title to their new-found relations—all led her to an utter oblivion of self in the matter, and added poignancy to her fears for them.

It was Saturday; and Mrs. Wright, in expatiating on the advantages of beginning work on Monday morning, dropped a few hints that convinced her mother she would feel a satisfaction in seeing them settled in another abode. Desirous of choosing one within an easy distance of the mill where the children would be employed she could not delay her application; and eleven o'clock saw her, accompanied by her neat and healthy young party, making the best of their way to the counting house of the Messrs. Z. A person officiating as clerk at a high desk, scarcely deigned any notice of the respectful salutation of the visiter, but continued writing, until, a little hurt at his discourtesy, the old lady drew forth her letter, which was endorsed *Private*, requesting to know whether he was the gentleman there addressed. The clerk took it in silence, surveyed, squeezed, and examined it; then, slowly rising, tapped at a door, and handed the epistle to some one within.

After a lapse of a few minutes, a gentle-

man of fashionable appearance issued from the inner room; and after contemplating the group, asked, "Well, good woman are you the person mentioned by Mr. Stratton in this letter?"

"I am, sir; I am Mary Green from L."

"And these are your grandchildren?"

"Three of them, sir: and the other is also under my care."

"Mr. Stratton," said Mr. Z. "has requested me to provide work for them; I believe I can do it. Here, Abel, write a note to M., and mind this." He pointed out a passage in the letter, at which the clerk gave a knowing smile, and proceeded to pen a few lines which he folded and sealed.

While this was being done, the widow respectfully informed Mr. Z. that high wages was not so much their object, as work proportioned to their strength, and sufficient intervals for instruction and proper relaxation: but he interrupted her, without taking his eyes from the newspaper which he was reading, "All that, my good woman, you must settle with my agent: I have nothing farther to do in the matter." And he returned to his apartment.

The agent was in another building, and busily employed in making out a number of returns. As he snatched the note which she tendered, the widow thought she had never seen a less prepossessing countenance: but she retracted her hasty judgment, when on glancing his eye over its contents, Mr. M. closed the large volume before him, and leaning his arms upon it, bent forward with a complacent smile, inviting her to be seated on a neighbouring chair, while the young people were directed to occupy a bench near the wall.

"So Mrs. Green, it appears you have the good luck to come well recommended to our principal, Mr. Z.

"Yes, sir, and he referred me to you."

"A nice party of young hands; let's see, what are their ages? but no, we'll say nothing of that just yet. Of course, you will make a long agreement, having such an advantage at entering."

"No sir; I wish to make the agreement for a short time on trial."

"Trial! Pho—be advised by me; don't

drive away good fortune when it comes to your door. Enter them for a couple of years at least."

"Oh no," exclaimed the widow, who was firmly resolved to do nothing rashly, "I must at present only engage them by the week; but if all turns out as I hope, we can then agree for a longer period."

"You are quite wrong: however waiving that point, till we see to others—let me tell you the scale of wages. With the ages you and I have nothing to do—the doctor settles that, and these children are so well-grown that he is not likely to under-rate them. In fact some people are so naughty as to mislead the doctor, by letting him think the youngsters are as old as they look, not what the parish registers make them: and as we can't get at the registers, they have it all their own way, you know."

"I should be sorry to act such a part, sir."

"Of course, of course: they are, as I said, naughty people; but they reconcile it to their consciences by arguing that it is the actual strength, not the actual age of a person which fits him for labour; and that if a child at eleven years old has the substance and muscle of thirteen, it is perfectly fair to rate him accordingly, and to let him earn the wages of thirteen, which are far better. So you see the people know how to beguile us."

"And if they did not," thought the widow, "you are ready enough to teach them the way of deceiving." She then asked where she should find the doctor.

"I should not wonder if he dropped in about this time," replied her new friend. "We may wait a few minutes. Meanwhile I'll tell you something of the work." He did so: and a very favourable account it was, particularly the circumstance of a new provision that the children should attend school daily during the week. To all her proposed stipulations he returned so ready and smiling an assent, with regard to the freedom and comfort of her children, that in a mind less willing to judge of others by its own artless honesty some suspicion would have been suggested. The good widow, however, attributed it all to the kind word of Mr. Stratton, considering his letter a sufficient

ground for the unusual attention paid to her wishes.

And so it was: for Mr. Stratton had made over this helpless but active and industrious family to those who were, in return, so effectually to lime them, as to preclude the possibility of their becoming burdens on the parish of L.; and had, at the same time, instructed his friends by a few pithy hints how to bait the trap that was to enclose the victims within its iron fence.

CHAPTER V.

ENTRANCE UPON FACTORY-LIFE.

THE persons with whom our agent had principally had to do, in reference to the youthful candidates for mill-labour, were too generally reducible under two heads—those who knew little or nothing of the legalized regulations, and those who were well disposed to evade them. To the latter class the widow Green evidently did not belong: to the former she probably did. In fact, the good woman was totally ignorant on the subject, and had it not been for the warning communicated by Helen, she would have come altogether unprepared. Vague, however, as that warning was, it induced her to put into her pocket-book certificates of the children's baptism and age, furnished by Mr. Barlow, and with the imparted wisdom which is not only pure but peaceable, she placed them in the surgeon's hands before any thing could be said. He regarded her with a look of kindness, not unmixed with pity, when she announced herself as the only surviving friend of the orphan party before him.

"Helen Fleetwood," read the surgeon, as he opened the first paper, "born so and so: then, my girl, you are now past sixteen?"

"Stop, stop," cried Mr. M., "we have nothing to do with certificates. The ordinary strength and appearance, doctor, is the rule."

"We may also be informed of the age."

"Well, well, there will be no difficulty in that. The two next are unquestionably

both thirteen and over ; the youngest nine ; therefore——”

“No, sir,” interrupted the widow ; “the little girl is not even twelve ; nor this boy much more than eight.”

“Then why did you bring him here, good woman? You of course know that children are not admissible to our mills under nine years. The fact is, that little fellow wants but a few days or so of the requisite age ; and having the strength and appearance fully, you would not condemn him to idleness and vice, for the mere formality of the thing : come, doctor, fill the certificate.”

“Excuse me, sir,” said the widow, modestly but firmly, “I cannot wrong this gentleman, by allowing him to certify what I know to be untrue. There is the parish register ; you will see the child is only eight years and a half.”

“Then he must stand aside,” said the surgeon, while Mr. M. wrecked the nib of a pen upon his thumb-nail, with looks of evident vexation.

“Now for you, my lad. Past thirteen, I suppose?”

“Yes, sir.”

The surgeon mused for a minute. He had looked in the boy’s pale face, felt his slender arm, and almost transparent fingers. Something appeared struggling in his bosom ; and with a sudden look full at the agent he said, “I cannot certify.”

“Not certify ! doctor, I have seen you pass many far younger, and quite as weakly, without deducting any thing on that score.”

“Very probably you have, Mr. M. ; nevertheless, I cannot in the present case agree to do it. His sister has more the appearance, and the reality, too, of the average strength than he has. I could conscientiously enter her in his stead.”

“You are quite right,” exclaimed the agent, “let it be so, and the exchange will be an advantage to all parties.”

The widow said nothing, but presented again the open certificate of Mary’s actual age to the surgeon, who, half smiling, proceeded to fill up the forms that left both her and her brother under the nominal protection afforded to children ; for the legislature, by its latest act on the subject, recognizes as young men and women all who have completed their

thirteenth year, and assigns to them the labour suited to adults !

The surgeon was bowed out by Mr. M. ; who proceeded with no very gracious looks to make the entries. Meanwhile the widow’s heart smote her with painful self-reproach. She regarded the sickly boy as wholly unfit for even the light tasks that she had been assured would be assigned to him ; and resolving to make any personal effort or sacrifice, rather than injure him, she requested the agent to postpone the insertion of his name for a while.

“Nonsense, nonsense, my good lady. He will be rated at nine years old, and worked accordingly ; and paid accordingly, too, thanks to your register and the doctor’s conscience,” he added with a sneering laugh.

But she still objected. In vain did the gentleman remonstrate, and in vain did he argue, except that the boy himself became anxious to undertake what was represented as being rather a pastime than a task. The widow remained inflexible ; and the agent, after entering Helen and Mary, closed the book with an air of displeasure ; then sternly told them to be at their posts by six o’clock on the Monday morning. He refused to listen to Mrs. Green’s queries as to the nature and duration of their employment, which he said she might make out among her acquaintance, adding that they need not stay there any longer. With a glow on her aged cheek, the widow led her companions to the door, secretly congratulating herself that she had not been beguiled into a more permanent engagement for the two girls.

When Mrs. Wright heard that not only Willy but James was exempted from the agreement, she lacked words to express her astonishment and regret.

“To be sure, this boy’s cheeks are not so red as the others, and he isn’t so overgrown as Mary ; but if all that are not stronger and stouter than he were taken from work, a precious town of young idlers it would be, and the mills might stop at once.”

“I don’t wish to be an idler, aunt,” said the boy, colouring.

“More shame for you if you did, and your grand-mother that has tended you

all your life long to have you thrown on her hands now, when she ought to be supported by you."

The boy burst into tears. "Granny," said he, "I *will* work, and nobody shall hinder me."

"Be quiet, my dear child," replied the widow, soothingly; then turning to her daughter, she said, with considerable earnestness, "Sally, I shall be always glad to talk over your family concerns with you at proper times, and to have your advice; but I must not be dictated to in what concerns these children; particularly in their presence."

"Oh, to be sure?" said the other, as she violently swung a pot from over the fire; "William's children must be gentlefolks anywhere; and their poor relations, that live by the hard labour of themselves and their little ones, may be proud of the honour of serving them."

This unfeeling reproach sank deep into the hearts it was intended to wound; but no reply was given. After a short pause the widow inquired about the schools, and was sullenly informed that there were plenty, from among which she could make her choice.

"And the Sunday school?"

"Wright can tell you about that; but it's little use, for they will be too tired to go there."

"I'm not tired a bit," said Mary.

"Tell me that this day fortnight," retorted her aunt, with a significant look.

Dinner being dispatched, the widow announced her intention of seeking a lodging to which they might remove on the Monday: Mrs. Wright offered some faint opposition, protesting they were quite welcome to the best she had to give: but her mother pleaded the advantage of settling at once; and having been told where to look for a respectable abode, she again sallied forth with her little band.

It was market-day; but the busiest hours of traffic being past, the country people were leaving the town, and our villagers had opportunity to contemplate the lower orders of the inhabitants now perambulating the streets, to pick up at reduced prices the refuse of the market and shops. Great as was the contrast between the dense smoky atmosphere of these narrow, gloomy, filthy streets, and

the pure sea-breeze of their own sweet native villiage, it was less painful than that which marked the population. Health, cleanliness, and good humour seemed almost equally banished from among them. Of bold, noisy mirth, drunken songs, and rude, coarse jesting there was indeed no scarcity: the poor strangers often shrank back in terror from the sounds they heard and the sights they beheld, but not even little Willy was tempted to smile by anything about him. Groups of children there were, and far more numerous than might have been expected, considering the factories were all full; but they seemed nearly divisible into two classes—incorrigible, reckless idlers, and poor, enervated sickly objects, who had crawled forth from the surrounding abodes of poverty to mingle with them. Still hoping to reach a quarter where beer-houses and gin-shops should be fewer, and comparative respectability more apparent, the widow passed on; but she found herself receding too far from the mill of the Messrs. Z., and the day fast closing too. She therefore fixed upon a small tenement, the occupier of which was a decent old man, who offered the accommodation of two apartments, such as she required; and having exchanged references, she secured the rooms for a week; resolving to make no more permanent engagement without sufficient deliberation. Alas! the poor widow little knew how total a sacrifice of her independence she had already made.

It was now getting late; the street-lamps were lighted, and before they set out on their return, the factories had poured forth their thousands of labourers, from the puny infant of six or seven years, to the grey-headed man whose broken-down aspect proclaimed him as unfit for toil as they. It was a spectacle of interest and wonder to the young Greens to behold such a rush of children coming from or hastening towards every point of the compass. Some shouting as they bounded along, in mischief or in sport pushing their quieter companions from the path, but the greater number evidently feeble from exhaustion, jaded and ill-tempered, and frequently resenting, in expressions of fearful impiety, the annoyances of their more lively comrades. The widow shuddered as this occurred within her

hearing, but still more were her feelings harrowed, when an involuntary pressure of her arm, which rested in Helen's, induced her to follow the direction of the girl's agitated look, and she beheld several mere children emerging from the doors of a gin-shop, flushed with the liquid flame which they had been swallowing. She hurried her young party onwards: secretly resolving that unattended they should never stir through those polluting scenes; and clung to the arm of her sympathizing supporter, with sensations of mingled thankfulness, pity, and self-reproach; for Helen, to whom alone she now looked for solace and for aid, was of years so tender, of mind so innocent, and disposition so retiring, that she needed for herself the guardianship that others must seek at her hands.

Bewildered and heart-sickened, she reached her daughter's abode; and, on entering, heard a faint, querulous voice, exclaiming, "Haven't I suffered enough, without being turned out of your company for my misfortunes?"

"Let her stay, mother," added Charles; "they're nailed now fast enough; and what signifies their seeing her?"

Thus prepared, the strangers exhibited no surprise at the addition made to the party within. The girl who occupied a low chair near the chimney-corner, appeared to be naturally much taller than Phœbe, but was so twisted and crooked that she scarcely reached her height. Every feature betokened consumption far advanced; and her large, glassy grey eyes seemed to rove about in quest of some object to interest them; while an expression of melancholy discontent showed how vain was the search. A large shawl pinned close round the throat fell over her shoulders and body; and she was evidently helpless as an infant.

The widow, merely asking, "Is this my grand-daughter Sarah?" imprinted an affectionate kiss on the pale cheek that was raised to receive it; and the girl's faint smile went more to her heart than any thing she had yet met under that roof.

"Grandmother," said she, "I am quite glad to see you: are those my cousins?" They all surrounded her immediately, and each had something kind to say. Helen approached last, and gently telling her

that though not a cousin she hoped she might be owned as a friend, saluted the poor girl, who, fixing her full eyes on her face, abruptly said "I like you very much, Helen Fleetwood."

Mrs. Wright seemed rather puzzled by this scene: she understood not the feeling awakened in the generous minds of her guests by a spectacle that she expected would have excited their disgust; for it was already apparent to all, that poor Sarah had only one arm, and that one so contracted to be nearly useless; while her feet were bent in, until she rested on the ankle-bones. "You see," said her mother, "what an object she is. The arm was lost by an accident, and all the rest came from convulsions and fits."

"Don't be frightened," said Charles, who saw the children shrink back at the last words. "She has no fits now, poor thing!" and he looked at her with an expression of tenderness which his countenance had hardly seemed capable of assuming.

When Wright came in, he answered all inquiries respecting the Sunday school nearly to the widow's satisfaction. He said the teachers were chiefly taken from among the adult working-people; and that there was plenty of the Bible. Respecting the day-schools, he told her that the children must produce every Monday a voucher from some master or mistress of having attended their school for two hours each day on any six days out of the week; but he added, that there were ways of managing that without being over-punctual. His wife interrupted him: "Oh, you need not talk of that; mother's conscience is too particular. Here are these two boys going to be gentlemen at large, because one is weakly for his age, and the other wants a few weeks of being nine!"

"You won't be able to afford that, mother," said Wright, shaking his head; "you must get the little fellow into a silk-mill, where the age is no objection, and the hours are shorter."

Both the boys brightened at this, and eagerly looked at their grandmother, who observed, "We shall see about all those things next week; to-morrow is a day of rest both for body and mind. Where is your place of worship?"

"Our parish church is three streets off."

When they retired for the night, Helen remarked that poor Sarah had interested her greatly; but that she seemed to have no idea of religion, which she thought very strange; for surely if the clergyman was at all like Mr. Barlow, he would visit and instruct one so afflicted, and with a short time to live. "Alas, my child," said the widow, "this place is so thickly peopled, that I fear the clergy cannot visit half their people unless they be sent for: and from what I have seen and heard in this house, such visitors would scarcely be over-welcome."

"The boys say they will lie in bed till noon to-morrow, and then go play in some fields near the town."

"Then, Helen, we must all endeavour to show them how Christians ought to spend the Sabbath-day. May we have grace to be faithful! It is not easy to flesh and blood, when placed among scorners, to persevere, even outwardly, in a right path; but we shall receive all needful help from him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not."

They did beseech that help, and laid down to rest; but many were the thoughts that kept them waking that night. Helen had obtained a view of their probable trials, that would greatly have oppressed her spirit, had not the powerful interest awakened in her mind for the poor dying Sarah well nigh banished everything else. Taught of God to value the privileges that his mercy had bestowed on her from infancy, they were now doubly enhanced by the sad spectacle of a family, nearly connected with those to whom she belonged, evidently destitute of even the desire to know the Lord. She longed to awaken in their dark, cold minds such a desire; but far more than any other did the mutilated girl's sad ignorance affect her; and many a plan she revolved for Sarah's spiritual good, ere sleep closed her eyelids.

The widow was not less agitated by the same theme; but her anxieties took a much wider range. In all that most distressed her as appertaining to her daughter's children she read a fearful tale of peril for those of her departed son. The evident jealousy of the former forbade her to expect help, or even common sympathy under any difficulty that she might en-

counter in a strange place; and as yet she had seen nothing that wore the aspect of benevolence—nothing but what contrasted strongly with the deference and respect to which she had been accustomed at home. Home! she dwelt upon the term till tears bedewed her pillow, as all the fond recollections connected with that magic word crowded upon her. "Yet," thought she, "it is far better thus to feel myself a pilgrim and a sojourner. It was the curse of Moab to be settled on his lees and not emptied from vessel to vessel, and therefore he became proud and presumptuous. It matters little where or how the remnant of my days is spent; but these poor helpless ones—who will care for them as I have done?" The promise was brought to mind, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort him." The widow prayed, and slept.

Early on the Sabbath morning they awoke, conscious of a sunbeam struggling to find entrance into that gloomy abode: they saw the bright ray striking aslant on the opposite roofs, and a clear blue sky stretching above. It was the first fine day that had shone on them since leaving home, and they hailed it joyously. "I suppose," said James, "this is no place for singing hymns, or else"— "And why not?" interrupted Mary, impatiently; "let's begin at once;" and before the widow could decide whether to allow it or not, the four clear voices were carolling their early Sabbath hymn, as they had always been accustomed to do in their own cottage.

No notice was taken, though it evidently created a stir in the adjoining apartment; but when the guests, fresh from their morning duty, and even more neatly dressed than before, presented themselves at the breakfast table, a glance of dissatisfaction from Mrs. Wright, who looked dirtier than usual, accompanied the remark, "You were determined we should not oversleep ourselves after the week's work."

"Did we disturb you, aunt?" asked Mary.

"I don't complain; but the children, poor things, would have been glad to remain quiet."

Phœbe now appeared, yawning, sighing, and looking so ill that they really grieved for having broken her rest. In

reply to their apologies, she only said, with a look of derision, "Oh, I like musical geniuses, especially when they are so devout." A titter from the press-bed in the corner, and the word "very" repeated by Charles, proved that the boys were keeping to their resolution of remaining there. Sarah too was absent.

The Sunday-school was opened long before they could arrive from the late breakfast table, with their dilatory conductor; and a very cursory view of it determined the widow not to enter her children there. Such an uninterested, heavy-looking set of scholars she had never seen; nor was their personal appearance as to cleanliness such as to invite a near approach. The greater number were dozing over their tasks, and the principal business of the teachers seemed to be that of shaking or cuffing them out of their lethargy, into which they presently relapsed; and Mrs. Green seeing that her own children were disposed to laugh at the odd appearance of the little slumberers, soon withdrew, intending to walk in the church-yard until the hour of service. Here, however, she found a large number of ragged idlers playing about; and bad language so prevalent that it quickly drove them thence. They then slowly proceeded along one of the principal streets; and before the welcome bell summoned them into a house of prayer they had wandered to the doors of another church. The respectability of their appearance procured them seats in a pew; and amiable indeed did the tabernacle of the Lord appear to them as a holy refuge from scenes and sounds alike new and disgusting to the modest villagers. The preacher was not a Mr. Barlow: little could they learn from his discourse of what they had been accustomed to in their own place of worship: but the appointed scriptures of the day—the Psalms and Lessons—seemed peculiarly suited to their need; and Mrs. Green thankfully owned, as many another had owned, that whatever the pulpit may do or leave undone, the desk in our churches must perforce preach the gospel.

With conscious reluctance they again reached Mrs. Wright's dwelling; but this was dissipated when they heard poor Sarah's exclamation of pleasure, while in-

visiting them to approach and receive her greeting. No change was made in her dress, but Phœbe appeared tricked out in such finery as to astonish her cousins, whose gaze of wonder evidently gratified her vanity. Charles was seated near, with a soiled story-book in his hand, which he seemed desirous to display while addressing to James the inquiry, "Well, I hope you have had enough of praying and psalm-singing!"

Mary was about to volunteer a tart reply; but Sarah's eager voice interposed: "Oh the singing? what sweet singing you made this morning! You must sing to me that pretty tune again. I cried when you left off, it was so sweet."

"We'll all sing," said Phœbe, "when they have learnt our songs"—"No, no," rejoined Sarah hastily, "their song is best."

"My dear, dear child," said the widow, sitting down by her, "our song is indeed the best; for it gives praise to the Saviour of sinners."

"Who is that, grandmother?" asked the girl, raising her eyes, with a half vacant look.

"Jesus Christ," repeated all her cousins, in a breath, and with a solemnity of tone that seemed to provoke Phœbe, who, tossing her head, observed to her sister in a voice of scornful reproach, "Just as if you didn't know that as well as they!"

"Do you know him, Sarah; do you know the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, and as your own Saviour from sin and its everlasting punishment?" asked the widow.

"No, ma'am; I do not."

"It's a lie," exclaimed Charles, "you do."

His grandmother turned to him, and commenced mildly explaining the difference between such a knowledge as he meant and a real saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus, but he broke in upon her, rising and with an oath exclaiming, "I wish you had not come here to pester us with your cant. I shan't stay to be bored with it, at any rate; and as for that poor girl, she has enough to bear without being made a gloomy Methodist into the bargain. Come along, Johnny—better lose one's dinner than get such sauce to it." He dashed down his book, seized his

unwilling brother by the arm, and left the house.

"Oh pray, pray don't be angry!" sobbed Sarah, who seemed to feel the insult to her aged relative as much as the young Greens evidently did.

"I am not angry, my love, not at all," said the widow, wiping the tears from the helpless girl's face. "Poor Charles is quite mistaken, or he would not speak so. We must pray for him."

"I never pray," observed the girl.

"But you must."

"I don't know how, grandmother; I never learned."

"There's another of your lies," remarked Phœbe; "you went to church often enough."

"Yes; but that's long ago, and I don't remember the prayers; so how should I pray?"

"Leave your nonsense," said her mother, sharply, "and don't keep your friends from taking off their bonnets."

Upon this hint the visitors retired to their room, where they heard involuntarily the united scoldings of mother and sister, with a sob from Sarah between the pauses. She was evidently too weak to cope with anything so agitating, and the widow trembled lest it should induce a return of the fits. She kneeled down, with her little party around her, and in a low voice commended to the mercies of God in Christ Jesus the poor wounded, straying lamb that she ardently longed to gather into his fold.

The two boys did not come back; and after a gloomy meal Phœbe went out also. On their return from afternoon service the widow engaged in a conversation with her son-in-law, her daughter, and two neighbours who dropped in, which, while she strove to make it subservient to their spiritual good, gave her an unexpected and startling insight into some details of the **FACTORY SYSTEM**, which we must reserve for another chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

A SCENE.

"So, you have come among us, ma'am, to try the comforts of the factory?" said one of the neighbours to the widow Green.

"I have come to seek employment for these children, and for myself also; but more in the hope of gaining an honest livelihood than of finding greater comfort than we enjoyed in the country."

"The country!" ejaculated the other, a man of most cadaverous and care-worn aspect, "Why a breath of country air, and a day's liberty, such as a pig-driver gets, is worth all that the best of us know in this vile town."

"But to those who are willing to work, such a market for their labour is a great advantage."

"Them that are most willing to work are not always the most able," returned the man: "and to my mind it's a cannibal sort of life to be eating, as one may say, the flesh off our children's bones, and sucking the young blood out of their veins."

"Hold your tongue, Tom South," said Mrs. Wright, angrily, "What business have you to talk so, having four children in the mills every day?"

"Yes, and three in the untimely grave, where you, neighbour, have five, besides the poor maimed thing yonder—and all through those murdering mills."

"You are a discontented man, South," said the other visitor, a decent looking woman, "but certainly you've had cause to complain."

"Ay, haven't I, Mrs. Johnson? I entered my younger children on the faith of these new acts, with their fine promises about schooling, short hours, inspectors, and all that. Bad as matters went, they told me it was because the acts hadn't time yet to work—all was soon to be fair and right; and so I neglected an opportunity of taking my poor family back to the blessed country labour, and here we may all die in ignorance and sin, as we live."

Alarmed as the widow was by the former part of this speech, the conclusion called forth a stronger feeling and she

said, "Oh, don't fancy that the mercy of Him who alone can remove ignorance from the mind and wash away sin from the soul is confined to any place. The cry of want and penitence will reach Him as soon from the lanes of a town like this as from the village green."

"I don't deny it, my good lady; but people who would become fit company for angels must begin by getting out of the way of devils."

"Meaning your neighbours, I suppose?" said Mrs. Wright, crimson with anger.

"He doesn't mean that," interposed the other woman: he is talking of the mills, and the wickedness that his poor children are learning there."

"They hav'n't much to learn, I'll be bound," retorted Mrs. Wright.

"Ah, that's too true," exclaimed South. "They are going to ruin as fast as they can drive."

"Notwithstanding your good example."

"Don't scoff at me, neighbour Wright. I know my example is none of the best: but if I see myself to be in a bad way is that any reason I should not wish my children in a better? With my bed-ridden old mother, and wife in a galloping consumption, and myself hardly up to the little work I can get, and not a hand's turn at any other business for them, I can't take them out of employ. What can I do?"

"Do you send them regularly to the school?" asked Mrs. Green.

"What school? This act mocks us with an order that every child should go to school twelve hours in the week, and have a ticket for it; but when it comes to the pass, how do they manage? Why they give them an hour's leave or so at such times as no school is open, or else when there's only schools within reach where the masters and mistresses won't receive the little dirty wretches, covered with the filth of the mills, among their children. Then, to make out the twelve hours, they tell them to go to school on Sunday morning, afternoon, and night; as if the poor creatures did not want a day's rest, to say nothing of play: of course they won't go."

"But how do they get vouchers?"

"They forge them fast enough, but in a great many mills they are allowed to slip

in without any, and the owners that have a conscience above that, turn off the young hands rather than the work should be stopped. Then the children must go to the silk-mills, where they are taken in at any age, and worked to death."

"Can all this be possible?" asked the widow.

"It can't be denied," said Mrs. Johnson, shaking her head.

"But surely the inspectors must discover such deceptions as to the schools, and punish them?"

"The inspector comes once a year, and is bound to advertize his coming in the newspapers; so they take care to have all right just then. But if a complaint is made, and proved too, this fine law allows the father or brother of the offender to try the cause, and gives him power to dismiss it, if he likes. I'll tell you what: within the memory of that girl, the law made the lowest penalty for working overhours, or for other such offence that was proved against a mill-owner, ten pounds, and forbade a near relation to try it; but now, as I told you, the worst case may be let off for half a crown, or set free, as the magistrate likes. So much for our rights, and the redress of our wrongs!"

The widow felt confounded: she looked at the children; and then at her daughter; but spoke not. South, with the readiness that we all feel to expatiate on ills when a fellow-sufferer is present, resumed.

"Then, in the case of ill-usage, you see the master usually contrives to shift the blame from himself to the managers or overlookers, or spinners: he don't order the children to be beat; he don't see them beaten; and so he gets off, and the poor things have no real protection any where."

By this time the three little Greens had drawn near the speaker, and were gazing in his face with looks of bewildered alarm: he observed it.

"Ah, God help ye, poor dears! Little pleasure will you have, except in the ways of sin."

"I'm not going into the mills," said Willy; "but Mary is. Will Mary be beat?" and his lip began to quiver.

"Never fear," said Mary, stoutly; "neither master nor man shall beat me: and as for sin, I won't go into any sinful company."

"You can't keep out of it, my poor child."

"If it is in the way of duty, sir," said Helen, modestly, "and we pray to the Lord to watch over us, and enable us to watch also, we shall be kept from evil ways, though we may be forced to have evil companions."

Mrs. Wright tossed her head with a very scornful sneer. South looked at the two girls alternately, and muttered, "Two more lambs for the shambles."

"Come, come, neighbour," said Mrs. Johnson, "you are too disheartening, quite. To be sure, not one girl in fifty keeps her character clean; and to be sure there isn't a small tradesman's wife would not think herself disgraced to take a factory girl for a servant; but what so many do doesn't look as bad as if only a few did it. I have seen some that turned out decently after all. My nephew married one, and she did very well."

"Yes," returned South, "and died at the birth of her first child, as everybody said she would!"

"The worst thing," proceeded Mrs. Johnson whose objection to discouragements was not very consistent, "the worst thing is the accidents. You must think of poor Sarah there, and take care of the machines."

"What machines?"

"Everything is done by machinery; you see, they are great things, ever so high and big, all going about and about, some on wheels running up and down the room, and some with great rollers turning about as fast as the steam can drive them; so you must step back, and run forward, and duck, and turn, and move as they do, or off goes a finger or an arm, or else you get a knock on the head, to remember all your lives. As to sitting down there's no such thing."

"No sitting down!" cried all the villagers in a breath.

"No, no," responded Sarah, in a melancholy tone, "no sitting down."

"Ah, poor soul!" said South, "it was standing and standing all day long that makes you unable to stand for the rest of your life."

At this juncture Wright entered, and looked with some surprise at the party. "Why you seem as if you had just run away from an earthquake, good people."

"Pshaw!" replied his wife, "it's only South at his old pranks of making out grievances to frighten my mother about her tender chicks."

"And our good mother of course takes it all for gospel," returned Wright forcing a smile.

"No, not gospel at any rate," said Mary: "for there is no good news in it, uncle."

"Gospel means truth, my dear."

"The gospel is truth, uncle: but the word means "good news."

Mrs. Wright sharply remarked, "You need not set up, Miss Green, to teach your elders and betters: this comes of filling young heads with conceit."

Mary was ready with a reply, but the widow interposed. "I should be sorry Sarah, to hear a child presuming to teach; but in this case Mary only answered her uncle according to the sense of the word, without knowing he used it with any other meaning. It is indeed good news, and the blessed certainty that it is also truth, un-failing truth, is what makes it better than the best of news. God grant us all to receive it, not only into our minds by hearing, but into our hearts by faith!"

"Grandmother," said Sarah, "what is the news that you call so good?"

Before the old lady could reply, Mrs. Wright turned fiercely upon the girl, and exclaimed in her loudest tone of anger, "If you dare to meddle or make with any of these canting tricks, I'll bundle you out of doors, to crawl through the streets, and beg your way."

"Will you so, mistress mine?" exclaimed her husband, in a tone no less angry than her own: "you should bundle out yourself first, I promise you."

A violent altercation ensued, in which South acted as pacificator, on grounds of propriety and respectability, while Mrs. Johnson poured oil on the flame, in her endeavours to quench it. Several times the widow attempted to speak, but in vain; and Helen, seeing poor Sarah trembling greatly, went over to soothe her. This turned the mother's ire upon her, "Stand off!" she vociferated. "None of your hypocritical ways here. You wheedled yourself in, to eat the bread of my poor brother's orphans, beggar as you are! But you shan't interfere in my house, I promise you."

All reply to this savage speech was precluded by Sarah falling from her seat in convulsions. The widow told Helen to take the frightened children into their room, and then with an energy that would not be repressed, while the two men raised and supported the struggling sufferer, she exclaimed, "Daughter, as you value a mother's blessing, desist from this violence. Your enmity against the gospel, the Spirit of God can alone remove: but I have a right to interfere between your evil passions and the children under my care: and oh," she added, as the blackening face of the girl gave evidence of the danger she was now in, "is it not enough to see your own child sinking into an early grave, but will you stand between the Saviour and the soul that he died to redeem!"

The entrance of the two boys now increased the confusion. Charles had evidently been drinking to a pitch of excitement, and Johnny looked more alert than he had yet done. The elder, who loved no living thing but Sarah, and was really fond of her, no sooner beheld her condition than he rushed forward, and demanded what they had been doing to his sister.

"'Tis your mother's work," answered Wright; and the young madman instantly seized a heavy missile, which he would have flung at her, had not Mrs. Johnson caught his arm, and South, leaving his hold of Sarah, wrested it from him. A short struggle enabled the man to confine so weak a creature, and he proceeded to take the only vengeance within his reach, by uttering a volley of dreadful imprecations and threats directed against his mother.

"Hold your tongue, you fool," said Wright, "the girl is coming to; and you'll frighten her off again.

"Here, lend a hand, and speak coaxingly to her; she'll mind you best." He winked to South, who, seeing the effect of these words, released his captive, and the boy's whole attention was immediately directed to his sister. Supporting her head on his shoulder, he whispered the kindest encouragements he could think of: only darting now and then a ferocious glance at his mother, who stood in sullen silence, apparently unmoved by a scene that dreadfully appalled the widow, and alarmed even the neighbours, to whom,

alas! it was not new. South, seeing the danger pretty well over, drew the old lady aside, and said in a low voice, "Now, ma'am, as they wished you to think I was making worse of the matter than I need do, just judge for yourself by what you see before you. There's your daughter, as nice, and respectable a young woman as ever came among us, turned into a stone, as I may say towards her own children by hardening her heart to their sufferings, that she might live on their toil and ruin. There's her husband, a quiet good-natured man, doating on his children, but forced to wink at what frets his very life; and only interfering when any thing so bad as this happens. There's the cripple, her legs useless by the over-fatigue of always standing at the frames, her arm gone, by being caught in the machinery, and she in a decline from fits brought on by her sufferings. Her sister—least said is soonest mended: only I can pretty well guess what sort of company she is in all this time. That boy is a devil incarnate; drinks, and swears, and cheats, and seems to hate all good for the sake of hating it. The little fellow he is leading in the same way; and it's a mercy for the others that they died young. A short life, and a sad one they had poor things, they are gone to heaven to be rewarded for it all. And now, Mrs. Green, have I said more than your own eyes can see to be the truth?"

The widow could make no reply: her heart was overwhelmed with terror and distress. Meanwhile Sarah seemed to be entreating her brother, who after some objection whispered to his father, and he returned an answer accompanied by a half-smile which drew a grin upon Charles' countenance. The boy then resolutely exclaimed, "Grandmother, poor Sarah was so pleased with the singing this morning, she wants to hear more of it—nothing else will serve her now. Please to call Miss Helen and the young 'uns, and let's have a devout Psalm."

The widow hesitated, and looked in the flushed scowling face of her daughter: but Charles reiterated the request in a more peremptory tone, and Sarah, in reply to her query, said she wished it very much. She therefore summoned the children and Helen, whose pale looks bore witness to their past alarm, and Charles,

who seemed delighted thus to annoy his mother, ranged them before Sarah, whom he still supported. "What shall we sing?" asked Mary: Helen whispered a reply; and they immediately began, in the softest tones of their sweet voices,

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins.

For some time Charles kept his eyes on his sister's face, smiling at her delight, which she expressed by most eloquent looks, and frequently pushing his arm, as if to keep his attention awake. As the singers proceeded, however, and Helen's voice in particular proved how deeply she entered into every word of that exquisite hymn, his eyes became riveted on them, his features lost their dark expression, and the power of sacred melody for a few moments triumphed over the evil spirit that troubled him.

"Sweet, sweet and beautiful cousins," said Sarah, "how I do love your faces and your songs."

"We'll sing again, shall we?" said little Willy, and a lively hymn,

Come let us join our cheerful songs.

When they had ended this, South, whose tears were starting, hoarsely said, "Bless you, sweet dears; if ever innocence and a cotton-mill went together, may you be innocent still!"

Mrs. Wright, who either from policy or some other cause had assumed her wonted composure, gravely addressed the widow. "It has struck me, mother, that as you don't send the little boys to the mill, you might turn a good penny out of them by letting them sing ballads in the street."

"Or make an engagement at one of the small theatres," added Mrs. Johnson, who seemed to take it quite seriously.

"Never mind their impertinence," said Charles to the party he was now pleased to patronize, "give us one more song."

"Shall it be the evening hymn?" asked Helen.

"Not until we have read and prayed, my love," replied the widow, hoping by this means to introduce the scripture and family worship, at least for once;—but the words put all in motion. Mrs. Johnson, in a great bustle, turned to look at the clock, protesting she had no notion it was

so late; and the rest took advantage of her rising to show in various ways their utter disinclination to any such procedure. The widow had hoped that South would second her proposal, but he was one of the many who see the disease, and loudly complain of its effects, and even talk of the only remedy, without desiring to know any thing experimentally of its power. She had, therefore, no alternative but to join in the general good night, and to retire.

"Granny," said the youngest boy, as he climbed on her knee, "this Sunday was not like our Sundays at home."

"Only while we were singing," remarked Mary; "and a great mercy that they let us; for cousin Charles was like a wild beast, and would have done somebody a mischief."

"Hush, Mary, you must not speak harshly of your poor cousin, but pray for him."

"Oh," exclaimed James, "I shall never bear the sight of him after the words he used to his mother. I heard them, and a great scuffle too; what were they doing?"

"No harm was done, my dear. I was indeed shocked at what you speak of, but it is the grace of God alone that makes you to differ, so far as you do, from others who have not been so well instructed."

"So Helen told him," observed Mary, "when he got into a passion at Charles's bad words. I wonder what Richard would have done if he heard anybody speak so to you, granny?"

"Dear Richard!" said the widow, glad to change the subject, "I trust this has been a day of peace and blessing to him."

The children took up the theme, and went over the details of what they supposed to have been their brother's employments through the Sabbath hours. This restored their cheerfulness; and they gratefully joined in those exercises which had been rejected in the adjoining room. The evening hymn, chaunted in a low tone, closed the day; and the children could not repress their satisfaction that they were to spend no more Sabbaths in that house.

"Mind," said Mary, as she repaired to her little bed, "mind, Helen, you call me in good time, as if we were going to milk old Buckle's cows."

"Helen forced a smile. "I will Mary; and though the streets of M. are not much like our own sea-shore, the path of duty is always pleasant, for the Lord shines upon it."

"I think Helen has turned preacher," said Mary to herself, "I never heard her talk in this way before. I wonder if the mill people will mind her. If they don't treat us with proper respect I shall make more dust among them than all the machines that old South talked of. Oh, it is all for want of a little proper spirit that the work-people are made slaves of. I can show them a better plan." And the poor child fell asleep to dream of conquests achieved in an imaginary mill.

CHAPTER VII

SETTING TO WORK.

LONG before morning had broke on the dull misty town of M. the widow Green and her family arose to pray, preparatory to the departure of the two girls. Gladly would the aged woman have accompanied them to the innermost scene of their labours, but this, she had been assured, was out of the question. However, to send them alone through the streets was not to be thought of; and after seeing them swallow a few mouthfuls of bread, she took Helen's arm, grasped Mary by the hand, and closely followed by the two boys, who would not remain, softly quitted the house.

The air was frosty, and consequently to them more congenial than the foul, dank atmosphere that usually prevailed in those pent-up thoroughfares. It breathed comparative refreshment, and imparted some buoyancy to their spirits. Helen was entering on her future task with a clearer view of its probable evils than any other of the party had taken; but strengthened by a determination to do and to suffer uncomplainingly whatever might be before her. She had spoken truly her prevailing thought when reminding the widow of the cross that every Christian must needs bear, and of their past exemption from all deserving the name. She now realized the

daily taking up of that cross, and her only solicitude was to be found following Christ under its burden. She would indeed have preferred any species of drudgery among the rural scenes that floated before her mind's eye, with their endearing recollections, in all the heightened beauty of deep contrast; but had the choice been her's, she would not for one moment have entertained a thought of deserting the post of sacred duty beside her benefactress, for the sweetest delights of her own loved native hamlet. In all Helen's pictures of earthly happiness, that family ever occupied the foreground; and an enjoyment unshared by them was a dream that never entered the affectionate girl's imagination.

Poor Mary, who intended to work such wonders in the factories by her unflinching resistance of all aggressive doings, did not feel quite so resolute under the chilling influence of a raw dark morning, as when, in her snug bed, she had watched the flickering candle that cast its ray on the page her grandmother was studying. Gladly would she have been spared the trial that now drew near; but no outward sign of such misgivings was apparent. On the contrary, she endeavoured to trip with a gait as lively as when bounding along the eastern cliff towards old Buckle's shed; but that was impossible. However, she bore up with a sprightly air, frequently turning to cheer her brothers with the promise of bringing home at night a full, true, and particular account of her expected adventures through the day.

At length they reached the mill, and there they found a pale, sleepy, little crowd, who, like themselves, were somewhat too early, shivering in the ungenial air. A large lamp was burning over the entrance-gate, and the morning's light had begun to throw a doubtful streak across the sky, blending with its sickly glare. Many curious eyes examined the strangers, and some questions were directed to Mary, whose communicative looks invited them. "You are too smart," said a little girl, surveying her dress; "I doubt your fine clothes won't hold long."

"Fine clothes!" responded Mary, in astonishment. "I never wore fine clothes in my life; and this is my common milking-dress."

"It's too good for the mill," rejoined the

other; and the bystanders confirmed her assertion, both by their words and appearance. Mary stoutly maintained her ground. "Neatness and cleanliness are never out of place," she said; "they make the poorest child look respectable; and so my granny has often told me."

A burst of rude laughter followed this speech, and the voice of a grown lad exclaimed, "You'll soon forget your granny's sayings, and learn things more to the purpose, my fine little madam."

The next moment the gate was thrown open, and a sort of rush ensued, in the midst of which the Wrights were seen elbowing their way. Phoebe cast a glance of disdain on her relations as she passed, and took no farther notice. John nodded; but Charles, after apparently overlooking them, and hurrying on, stole back, as if more than half reluctant to have anything to do with them, and in a hesitating manner said, "I promised Sarah to see you in; so come along, for I can't stop a minute."

At the door, the widow was told that she must go no farther, unless she had work in the mill: and so great was the press just then, that she scarcely knew how the girls had been disengaged from her tentative grasp, and borne inward by the living tide, while she, with the boys, was obliged to turn back. Leaving to Mary's recital the adventures of the former, we will accompany the latter to their apartment at Wright's, where they hastened to pour forth in earnest prayers the solicitude of their hearts for objects so dear to them, launched on a scene of which they only knew enough to render them more anxiously curious as to its details. The widow felt so many misgivings, that she clung more closely to the assurance of being able to withdraw her children whenever she pleased; and already she was secretly weighing the respective merits of different plans, supposing this to fail, as she could not but fear that it would. The dress, language, demeanour of the young people whom she had seen at the mill-gate, was anything but prepossessing: and the multitude of men and women, but chiefly men, whom she remarked repairing to the different factories, were very unlike what her fancy had pictured of an industrious, thriving population. She had

lived too long, and seen too much of human nature, to expect the absence of vice and misery in any class, more especially among the lower orders densely peopling a large town: but that ensnaring pamphlet, with the glowing representations of Mr. Stratton and his friend, had spread a colouring over this particular scene not so easily dispelled, even when the naked reality began to force itself on her unwilling perception, confirming the purport of South's remarks, which she would fain have referred to the promptings of a discontented mind.

After a dull breakfast, the two little boys went to talk to Sarah, who was not well enough to leave her bed; and Mrs. Green at once commenced an earnest and serious, though affectionate, remonstrance with her daughter, on the evident neglect of parental duties, which could only issue in the ruin of her children. The representation was silently heard to its closing appeal, which referred to the different line of conduct pursued by the speaker towards her own family when young. "I know that very well, mother," answered the other, somewhat softened; "and I'm sure no children ever had kinder or better parents than we; but a country life makes things come easy enough that one can't think of doing in a town."

"If you mean those things that I have alluded to, scriptural teaching, prayer, and watchfulness over the young; surely they are rendered even more necessary where temptations abound, as they plainly do here."

"Ay, but you can't keep your eye on the children, as you do in the country."

"Supposing it to be so, Sally, ought not that to make you more diligent in teaching them to remember that the eye of God is never withdrawn—that he is ever about their path, and spieth out all their ways; and that no darkness can cover them from his piercing sight?"

"It would not be enough that I chose to teach, if they didn't choose to learn."

The widow felt that she who uttered this remark was a living illustration of its truth: however, she persevered. "You, my daughter, have one part to perform, they another. God requires of you to point out to your children the way they

should go: and whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, you are bound to tell them their duty."

Mrs. Wright grew impatient; she began to fidget, to look at the clock, and to mutter maudibly: her mother resumed. "My dear child, I will not detain you long: I am about to remove from your house, and our future meetings may not be so frequent as I wish. Only give me this satisfaction before I leave you: promise that you will ask help from above, in the very difficult work you have too long neglected, of correcting and guiding those poor young people."

"What's the good of asking for what I could not use if I had it?" said she peevishly.

"He who gives the help will also enable you to use it."

"Mother, it's all folly to begin now. I have such a set to deal with, that you might as easily turn this old table into gold as alter them for the better. You saw the way that undutiful fellow treated me yesterday."

"It was a dreadful scene: but had you commended him and yourself to the divine care for the day? Oh, Sally, had you honoured the Sabbath in God's house and in your own, and, as far as in you lay, constrained your family to do the same, Satan would never have obtained such an advantage here."

Mrs. Wright now became irritated: "I'll tell you my mind fairly, mother; bad as it was, I'd rather have it so than make my house the gloomy place you would wish it to be—filled with long faces, and dismal voices, drawling out melancholy psalms, and texts, and prayers all day long; breaking down the natural spirits of the children."

Just then, a sound issued from the other room, of two merry voices carolling a lively rural ditty, accompanied by Sarah's laugh. The widow, considering this the best answer to her daughter's coarse and unjust remarks, remained silent.

"Well, mother, I'm sure you mean it all kindly:" said Mrs. Wright, returning from the cupboard, to which she had gone in some haste, "but stay a few weeks, and you'll understand the difference better than you do now."

"I cannot understand better than I do

now that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to give account of the things done in the body. Oh that I could persuade you, my poor Sally, to taste and see how gracious the Lord is to those who call upon him—how pleasant is that service which you account hard and severe: and what great gain there is in the godliness which you despise!"

"Mind me now, mother: if you don't make something of those boys by setting them to work, all the gains of your godliness won't keep you long from beggary."

"I intend them to work, because idleness is sinful and dangerous; and because we are bound to seek God's help in the way of honest industry, not that of slothful expectation; but I will not place them in a factory yet."

"Do as you please: you'll find you must."

The widow now went to take leave of the poor girl, whom she found looking much more animated, and who welcomed her most eagerly.

"Dear granny, I am sorry and not sorry for your going away. I cannot bear to part with you all; but you will be more comfortable in a place of your own."

"We will often come to see you, my dear: and now tell me, Sarah, do you know who has afflicted you thus?"

"It was partly done by the machine, ma'am, and partly by the overbaker that used to strap me and kick me, when I used to get too tired to work."

A chill crept over the widow as she thought of her dear children; but she went on: "That was not my meaning, my love: who do you think has ordered these afflictions for you?"

Sarah remained silent, looking perplexed. Willy said, in a soft tone, "It was God, cousin."

"I don't believe it was," she quickly answered, turning her full eyes upon him.

"Why not?" said James.

"Because Helen Fleetwood told me that God is very good; and I don't think he would order me to be hurt in this way."

The two boys looked at their grandmother, who, greatly affected, said, "My dear child, God's mercies often come to us in a very strange shape; and I trust you will yet find that even these hurts

were ordered by his great goodness, for your everlasting benefit."

"Hush!" said the girl, glancing to the door, where her mother now appeared to ask whether a neighbour, who had a leisure hour, should assist in removing the luggage: the offer was gladly accepted, and in another hour the party had entered their new abode.

The table was scarcely spread for dinner before Helen and Mary hastened in, their clothes already somewhat the worse for a few hours wear in a mill, but with fresh colour, smiling faces, and excellent appetites. "Oh how nice," cried Mary, "to have a home of one's own again; and how neat you have made it look!" She was soon assailed with questions, to which she replied, that she liked the mill greatly, but would not begin her story then, as they had only a quarter of an hour out of their dinner hour, some cleaning being required before they went to work again. Accordingly, dinner was soon dispatched, and away they ran, with an alacrity that dissipated much of the widow's uneasiness.

In the evening, Mary commenced her promised recital. "When Charles Wright hurried us away from you, granny, I was so dizzy with the crowd about us that I hardly know how we managed. He behaved civilly, for him, and took us to a man and said something; and the man bade us come along with him. So Charles left us, and we went on, and all I could make out was that I should be a piecener."

"What is a piecener?" said James.

"Oh, you'll hear presently. Well, after going through a good many places that I could make little out of, it was so dusk, and we walked so fast, we came to a room, and the man put me in there, and went off with Helen, before I knew what I was about, and what a sight I saw? Nothing ever frightened me so much."

"Why, you said nobody should frighten you in the mills," remarked Willy.

"Nobody did frighten me, though the man that took me from the other, looked as cross and spoke as gruff as old Buckle; but only think, boys, what it must be to see ever so many great big things, frames upon carriages on each side of the room, walking up to one another, and then walk-

ing back again, with a huge wheel at the end of each, and a big man turning it with all his might, and a lot of children of all sizes keeping before the frame, going backwards and forwards, piecening and scavenging—why, we all stared yesterday, when that Mr. South said there was no sitting down; but nobody would even think of it. Move, move, everything moves. The wheels and the frames are always going, and the little reels twirl round as fast as ever they can; and the pulleys, and chains, and great iron works over-head, are all moving; and the cotton moves so fast that it is hard to piece it quick enough; and there is a great dust, and such a noise of whirr, whirr, whirr, that at first I did not know whether I was not standing on my head."

"How funny!" said James, laughing, "but what was your work like?"

"Why you see, the frame goes sloping up so, and the bottom edge is not so high as this little table; and the upper edge has got two rows of little rollers, and over them several other rows, that stand up; and there are a great many cotton threads reaching from the bottom to the top of the frame; and while the machine moves about, the threads go running up, and twist round the little rollers above. Now the threads being thin and fine, they often break, and I have to keep a great watch, to get hold of the two ends when one breaks, and put them together, the same as in spinning."

"It is spinning," said Helen.

"Yes, it is; but not a bit like Mrs. Barker's wheel and distaff, with only one thread to mind. The man at the wheel is the spinner, and when the frame comes up the room he has to set his hand against it and push it back, which is pretty hard work. The joining, or piecening, is easy enough when you get used to it."

"And what is scavenging?"

"Oh, that made me laugh. You see, bits of cotton wool will stick to the thread, and they mustn't go on the reels; so there is a little girl huddled up under the frame and she snatches off all the loose wool, and throws it down so fast! and when the machine runs back, if the little scavenger did not bob and duck, and get very low, she would have a fine knock on the head."

"Poor thing!" said Helen, "she can

never stretch herself out, hardly ; and she is almost choked and smothered in the dust of the light cotton bits that she has to pull and scatter about her.

"I did not think of that, replied Mary, "it amused me to see her so frightened and all in a bustle, so I laughed, and the spinner laughed to see me ; and he is like old Buckle, not so cross as he looks."

"Did the scavenger laugh ?" asked James.

"No ; she seemed angry, and muttered : I am sorry I was so thoughtless, granny, I will not laugh any more at her."

"I hope not, my dear ; all this is new to you, but you may find it very fatiguing before long ; and then how would you like to be laughed at by others ?"

"Nobody shall laugh at me."

"You could not prevent it, Mary. Remember how often I have told you, that the choice of what we are to be and to suffer is not in our own hands. It becomes us all, at all times, to submit humbly to whatever God sees fit to lay upon us ; and to help our companions to do the same."

"Yes granny ; I will always submit to God ; but I need not let my fellow-creatures domineer over me."

"If the Lord makes them the means of afflicting us, Mary, it is to Him we submit. But we may not reason about it, since we have a positive command, 'Submit yourselves one to another.' 'Be clothed with humility.' 'Resist not evil.' There are many more such passages in the Bible."

Mary said nothing, but she looked unconvinced. Helen remarked, "There is no resting in a mill, for nobody can stop the great wheels always kept going by the steam. My work is among much bigger machines than Mary's, in the carding-room, where the cotton is pulled out and prepared for the spinners."

"Do you walk about ?" asked Willy.

"Yes, a good deal. There is plenty of bustling, and crowding, and hurrying, but the work does not seem very hard. Phœbe Wright is in the same room."

"Is she civil ?" Mary inquired.

"I hope I shall do nothing to make her otherwise," answered Helen ; and the widow felt that the question had been evaded. In fact, Phœbe could not restrain for a single day her bad feelings against

the girl whom she had scoffingly introduced among her new companions as a mighty great saint ; who sang psalms by way of payment for above a dozen years' board, lodging, and clothing, which a silly old woman had given her at the expense of her own grand-children, now forced to leave a respectable home in the country, and to work in the factories for bread. The first part of the information of course excited much laughter, the latter no less indignation : and poor Helen found herself at once marked out for the contempt and dislike of the people around her. She hoped it might wear off ; but whatever ensued she resolved in the strength of the Lord to submit, and never to grieve her friends by communicating the trial to which their kinswoman had subjected her.

But as time wore on, this was more difficult than she had anticipated ; for Helen Fleetwood with all her advantages was only a poor frail mortal, like others. Often did this determination of keeping her mouth as with a bridle, while the wicked was before her, cost a most severe struggle ; often did the silence she was constrained to keep from good words fill her with pain and grief. When she had once or twice attempted to reason with her persecutors on scriptural grounds, and found that her remonstrances were received with shouts of derision, and her quotations from holy writ blasphemously parodied by a few who, being the worst, of course took the lead, she felt that in this instance the pearls were trampled under feet by beings ready to turn and rend her, and she forbore to inflame their bitter hostility. Yet her compassionate heart longed to repeat what might, she thought, be blessed to some poor children around her. The majority of her immediate companions were of her own and Phœbe's age, and seemingly hardened past all fear or shame ; but some interesting and modest-looking little girls were mingled among them. Her greatest annoyance however by far, was from the boys, who were often set on to insult her in ways more trying than the rest. Still she endured, as seeing Him who is invisible ; but when returning to her home, when meeting the affectionate smiles of its beloved and loving inmates, most galling was the restraint that withheld her

from claiming their ready sympathy. It would have been so soothing to tell out her sorrow to that maternal friend, and to listen to the simple but sweet comforts that even the children could supply. James would have found many an apposite text in his bible, and Willy have repeated or sang to her the hymns most suitable to such a case. But she saw the burden gradually increasing on her best earthly friend; she discerned in Mary a growing spirit of discontent and disobedience; and she resolved, instead of adding her calamities to the general stock, to take a double share of those which oppressed her benefactress.

One week was sufficient to develop thus far Helen's position in the mill. Mary's was worse, inasmuch as she wanted the wisdom and the strength that Helen derived from on high. Impetuosity, self-confidence, and irritability were the little girl's prevailing disadvantages; her excessively open temper, and love of talk, rendered them evident to all about her, while her unsuspecting warmth of heart made it easy to win Mary's affection, and to impose on her credulity. A little flattering went far with her, if so administered as to suit her natural love of pre-eminence; no child perhaps was harder to drive, but none more easily led. It may be supposed that such a character invited the various attacks of those who, amid the sameness of their disagreeable employment, were glad of anything to diversify the scene; of others, who felt nettled at what frequently assumed the appearance of a conscious superiority over themselves; and of that numerous class whose inherent love of mischief, or desire to reduce all to their own low level of morality, induced them to assail a new comer with temptations, mocks, or malicious ill-offices, just as occasion or their own caprice might prompt. To say that all her companions belonged to one or another of these descriptions would be saying too much; but whatever good leaven there might be in the lump, was hidden beneath the abounding evil, and worked unseen, as to any influence upon the mass.

The widow, as yet, saw nothing of all this: Helen's griefs were carefully hidden, and as the ground which little Mary had at present taken up was that of a very

rare and perfect example among her comrades, she sustained the character at home with some success; but the old lady was beginning to see that a life of idleness would prove equally injurious to her boys with one of more general exposure: already they had made some unsuitable acquaintance in the street, for she could not cage them like birds in a narrow apartment—and by sundry pranks within doors had added force to the landlord's remarks on the folly of keeping them "like born gentlemen, with nothing to do. 'Tis no concern of mine, mistress," he added, "but you seem such a respectable, industrious body yourself, and too sensible for any silly pride, that I do wonder you can't see the mischief of spoiling the lads for life."

"But I want to find some other way of living for them, rather than the mills; and if I don't, next week I shall send them to school."

"Well, ma'am, you are the best judge; but you must pay pretty high for a school where they can learn more than they know now; and I can't see the use of going over the same things twice. Boys get as idle at school as any where else, when they've no more to learn. As for employment, if you have friends among the gentry, not being mill-owners, you may get them into some service: or with a good round sum, you can bind them to a trade. But, as I said, 'tis no business of mine; and as long as I get my rent, you're all heartily welcome under my roof."

The last words sank deep; for the rent of such respectable places was high; and the widow had made some calculations that proved they must all, ere long, work for their daily subsistence. The Saturday afternoon brought in the earnings of the two girls; and she felt it was unjust to let them labour alone for the whole family. She therefore spoke to her landlord, who readily promised to obtain admission for Willy into a silk-mill; and pleased at what he considered a very sensible use of the advice he had given, the old gentleman offered to procure a little work at some sort of simple manufacture, such as netting, for James to do at home, until she could make up her mind to engage him also. The Sabbath found them all most thankful to enjoy its privileges unmolested; and poor Helen especially longed

for the refuge of those courts of the Lord's house which were doubly and trebly endeared to her by the last few days' experience, and the too just anticipation of what was yet to come.

In the course of the week Mrs. Green had found a Sunday-school far superior to that which she had before seen, and a ministry better suited to her need. Of both these the party availed themselves, and had scarcely finished their comfortable meal, and entered upon the sweet subject of their village home and absent brother—when they were surprised by a tap at the door, followed by the entrance of Charles Wright, who civilly asked whether his coming was an interruption. "The addition of another of my grand-children to our Sunday party must be a welcome one," replied the widow, drawing a seat near her own for this unexpected guest; who, after paying some compliments on the very neat and pretty abode, proceeded with no small embarrassment to open his commission.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FARTHER INSIGHT.

"FIRST, then, grandmother," said Charles, "Mother is very sorry she had'n't time to pay you a visit yet."

"I did not expect it, my dear: I knew it was a busy week with her as well as with me."

"All right:" responded the lad, whose affectation of the man was rendered more uncouth by his appearance, and the strange contrast it formed to the real manliness of Richard, who never aspired to be more than a boy: "All right; but ma'am, every body is not so reasonable, and there's poor Sarah fretting like a fool about it. Nothing will serve her but the fancy that we've all quarrelled, though we told her you were ill, and all sorts of lies, to pacify her."

The Greens were horrified, and shrank back as this unprincipled declaration was made, evidently on purpose to shock them, but the widow's steady gaze seemed to abash the young profligate, who hastily

added, "We wanted to keep her from making herself ill; but she set her heart upon sending a message to you, and getting an answer; and so to save the ninny any farther moaning I came about it myself."

All the party now looked complacently at their guest: James sidled up to him, and said, "I do like you for being so kind to poor Sarah."

"All very fine, my little gentleman-at-large," replied the other, with a patronising stroke of the boy's head.

"But what is the message you have been so kind as to bring us?" asked the widow.

"'Pon honour, I believe I've forgot it! Oh—ay—let's see; 'tis precious nonsense I know. Ah, I remember now: why it seems you'd a kick-up last Sunday with old South concerning some word that you couldn't agree about!"

"It was gospel," interrupted Willy: "Mr. South said it meant truth, and we told him it meant good news."

"And granny proved that it was both," added James.

"Bravo, bright memories!" exclaimed Mr. Charles, theatrically, "there's nothing like rustic genius. Well, grandmother, the poor girl's fancy was tickled by this learned debate, and she wants you to send her word by me why this same gospel, whatever it may be, is good news."

Painfully disgusting as was the studied, sneering levity of the boy, his message rejoiced them all. The widow began, in her most striking and affectionate manner to give such a reply as she deemed suitable no less to his case than to Sarah's; but after a minute he stopped her.

"Oh, mercy, ma'am! surely you don't expect my poor knowledge-box to hold all this, and to carry it safe through the streets all the way home without spilling! Make the answer as short as you can: any thing will do for that simpleton."

"Charles," said the old lady, kindly but solemnly, "I cannot allow you thus to jest and trifle with a subject so awful—a subject no less important to you than it is to Sarah and to us. You have done a most brotherly thing in coming here on such an errand: do not spoil all by your unsuitable behaviour."

The boy coloured with anger, and

seemed about to rise; but did not. Suddenly recollecting himself, he said, "Come! do it in your own way, and I'll take down the heads:" then producing a bit of pencil, he opened the cover of a dirty song-book, so as to display the many offensive things that were already scrawled on it. The widow calmly closed the disgraceful volume and laying upon it a piece of clean paper said, "Now proceed to make your notes."

Affecting to suppress a laugh, and putting on a face of mock gravity, he looked up for his instructions.

"We are all sinners," commenced the widow, repressing, by a look which she had seldom worn, the jeer that seemed about to pass his lips: "we have the eye of an all-seeing, all-holy God continually upon us; and every thought of our heart is known to him. Pride, falsehood, uncleanness, intemperance, wrath, envy, all these are terribly sinful: and so is every act, every word, every feeling, that is not according to the holy will of this just God."

It was evident that Charles, though he scribbled away, was not taking it down faithfully: but he could not help hearing it, and with this she resolved to be content.

"The wages of sin is death: God has declared it; and that death is not the end of an existence, but an eternity of torment hereafter.

"Every one of us has sinned: every one lies under this condemnation.

"When we were thus helpless, thus condemned, God accepted a ransom for our guilty souls, even the precious blood of His only Son, who became man that he might suffer and die on the cross for our iniquities.

"This sacrifice is sufficient before God, to atone for all the sins of all the sinners upon earth, from the creation to the judgment-day; but it is only made effectual to them that believe, and come repentingly to ask it.

"We are so blinded and hardened by sin that we can neither believe nor understand nor serve God, without the aid of the Holy Spirit: and this aid is given to all who for Christ's sake implore it.

"Christ having suffered for our sins, and risen from the dead, now lives, at the

right hand of God, to intercede for us: and all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to them who come to God by Him."

The energy, the vivacity with which the old woman detailed these important heads of doctrine, speaking deliberately, and pausing after each, while her hand placed on his arm seemed anxious both to arrest his attention, and to direct his movements, quite overawed for a moment even the dissolute young scoffer whom she addressed. At length he looked up, and with somewhat of his usual pertness remarked, "So then, this is all the good news we have had such a fuss about?"

"Not all," replied Mrs. Green: "but this is enough of it to make you happy now and for ever, if you receive it into your heart by faith."

"Oh, many thanks to you, it is no affair of mine: the silly girl yonder sent me upon a fool's errand, that's all. However, I am much obliged to you, ma'am," he added more respectfully, "for the trouble you've taken. 'Tis one one thing to answer a question when a body asks you, and another to come preaching into people's houses whether they will or no." Then crumpling the paper, and thrusting it into his pocket, he shook hands with the old lady, nodded to the rest, and placing his hat on one side of his head, walked out, whistling a jig.

"I'm glad he came," remarked James; "and to tell the truth I'm glad he is gone."

"I wished him a hundred miles off," said Mary, "till I found he brought a message from poor dear Sarah. He interrupted us talking about Richard; and indeed if I wasn't thinking of Richard, Charles would always put me in mind of him."

"How can you say so, Mary," exclaimed Helen; "how can Charles Wright possibly remind you of our own dear Richard?"

"Just the same, Helen, as a dark, dull winter's day in this foggy town makes me think the more of the warm bright sunshine of our morning walks by the seaside, with the little waves dancing to the tunes the birds sang."

"But remember, my love," said the widow, "that what you complain of, both in the place and in your cousin, is owing to the absence of light. The bright sun

in the firmament cannot dart his rays through the thick mists that hang over this town, or it would be very different; neither does the brighter Sun of Righteousness shine upon poor Charles to drive away the unlovely darkness from his character."

"Charles is ugly enough," observed Mary; "but Sarah is much worse crippled than he; yet I think her quite a beauty when she looks so fond at us, and thanks us for showing her any little kindness, and asks questions about the Lord Jesus. Well, I hope now we shall have the rest of the Sunday to ourselves."

But this wish was scarcely uttered when another tap at the door ushered in Mr. South.

"Glad to find you so comfortable at last, neighbours; I thought I'd come in for a bit of chat; but 'twas hard to make out your lodging. I met Charles Wright in the next street; he told me he had no idea where you lived."

"Oh, what a wicked story-teller he is!" cried Mary, "why he has just left us."

"Ay," muttered the visiter, with a shrug, "that's factory morals; he didn't like me to suppose he had been in such good company."

"It was owing to you that he came here, Mr. South," said Helen, "and I dare say granny will tell you all about it."

Thankful for such an opening, the widow took the hint, and succeeded in making her new friend listen to a pretty full statement of truths that he would as willingly have been excused from hearing; but she was not one of the inconsistent Christians who put their candle under a bushel when those who most need to have the light placed before them enter into the house. As a guest in other places she was necessarily sometimes under comparative restraint, and therefore she preferred her own home, where full liberty of speech prevailed on the subject most important; contenting herself with the conviction that those who loved the theme would enjoy it; while those who loved it not, were in the way of profit if they staid, and free to depart when they chose.

South, however, came to talk about the mills, and resolved to let the old lady have her say first, in the hope that she would then listen to him. He was disappointed;

for when, on her coming to the end of her lecture, he began his discourse, she mildly but decisively interrupted him. "Excuse me, neighbour, but this being the day of rest from worldly labour, we must hallow it by shutting out all worldly thoughts and subjects too. If you will join us in reading and conversing over the bible, in our hymns and prayer, we shall be most happy to have you make one of our party: if not don't be offended, neighbour, that we must go on, even if it be the means of our losing your company."

"Oh, ma'am, I'm sure it would be a great pleasure to me to join you in all those good things, if you think a little rational talk so wicked on Sunday; but I have outstaid my time already, and must bid you good-bye."

"Dear granny," said Helen, "how glad I am you got him to listen so long. Poor man! I fear he has a very uncomfortable home, and that was why I was so bold as to speak about Charles' message."

"If he tells it again," remarked Mary, "Charles will get finely laughed at, and that will make him more spiteful than ever."

"Then perhaps I did wrong," said Helen, looking distressed.

"No, my dear child, you did perfectly right. It is our duty to use whatever opportunities God gives us of being faithful to others, for their good; consequences belong to God."

"You know, granny, the apostle warns us against doing evil that good may ensue; but I am afraid I often hold back from doing good for fear evil may ensue—that is, something unpleasant to myself or to those I love."

"We are all tempted to do that, Helen; but we must pray to be made valiant for the truth, and never to shrink from declaring it. The fear of man often bringeth a snare."

Helen deeply felt that it did; and she laid up in her heart the counsel now given by the friend who little knew what was passing in her thoughts. She had, at the moment of speaking to South, been almost withheld, from the apprehension of a fresh burst of malignity on the part of Phoebe, if he should repeat it at Wright's; but she overcame the suggestion, and boldly called forth what she hoped would profit the poor man. He was not an ill-natured

person; and though on the same afternoon he saw some of the family, nothing passed his lips on the subject. Our poor cottagers, meanwhile, enjoyed their Sabbath exercises in peace; attended an evening service, and closed the most comfortable day they had yet passed in M. with the united voice of tuneful praise.

Next day, the landlord brought tidings of what he called fine luck: there was an excellent opening for Willy in a silk-mill not very far off, and the person under whose charge he would be was a friend of his own. "Just the sort of man for you, Mrs. Green; for when I went to his house last night, they were singing psalms as loud as they could bawl, and I had to come away without seeing him: however I met him this morning, and he's ready for the boy."

This was an inducement not to be slighted, and when, on a short interview, the widow found Mr. Parkins a serious man, with every appearance of being what the landlord represented him, she committed Willy to his charge; while James was half reconciled to remain at home by the old gentleman's assurance that he was to have some very nice employment, which was realized the next day by his bringing in a few tools, with sundry bits of wood, and instructing the boy how to set about making small articles for sale.

The widow visited her daughter; but Sarah, after much suffering, had been ordered an opiate, and was in a sound sleep. She therefore got no information as to the result of Charles' mission, of which his mother evidently knew nothing, by her apologizing for not one of the family ever going to see them yet. Mrs. Wright seemed sulky and downcast, and the manner in which she received a present that her mother insisted on making, in return for the trouble and expense incurred by entertaining so large a party, proved that money was just then highly acceptable. She brightened up as soon as the gift, after many pretended objections, was safely deposited in her tea-caddy, and became so sociable that the widow hoped to lead her to listen to spiritual counsel; but here, as usual, she was disappointed.

We must now leave them, to take a peep into the mill of the Messrs. Z.

Mary had described the spinner to whose wheel her frame was attached, as looking equally cross with old Buckle, but being, like him, better than his looks. This was true; the poor man was soured by a life of extreme labour, and his health so materially affected as to increase the gloom of his countenance; but he was not habitually ill-tempered. With the rest, he could enjoy any variety in his monotonous path; and Mary was so unlike all her companions, that she afforded him frequent amusement.

The little scavenger whose feelings the thoughtless girl had hurt on the first day was now become her special protégé; and woe to the person who should inflict any needless annoyance on Katy Malony; such woe at least as Mary Green's most eloquent and energetic rebukes could inflict. She had, for a wonder, met with a heart quite as warm as her own, a poor, persecuted, solitary child, simple as a babe in the cradle, but sensitive to an extraordinary degree, and gifted with that power of attachment which, like the ivy to its supporting oak, clings round the object of its grateful veneration, and would rather perish than be torn from it. Besides, poor little Katy had been struck by the respectable dress and deportment of the new piecener, and readily yielded her a degree of deference quite delightful to Mary Green, who, although she would have been really distressed at the idea of being thought proud, had more than the average share of that corrupt principle within, and dearly loved to be regarded as a superior. The expression of Katy's uplifted eyes, as she peered through the whirling threads at her companion above, and the pretty soft brogue, an accent quite new to her protector, in which she uttered "Miss Mary, ma'am," were more gratifying to her than she was aware of, from the deep respect which they implied: while the zealous devotion of the scavenger in picking from Mary's can the woolly particles that often covered its contents, to the total neglect of her own poor portion, and the eagerness with which she volunteered every possible good office, showed that love was the root from whence all sprang.

Katy's extreme simplicity, together with some occasional mistakes which they were pleased to call Irish bulls, rendered her

quite a butt to those around her. She happened to be the only one of her race in that part of the room; and having but lately come over, that is, about a year before, she was considered fair game for the very poor witticisms of her neighbours, whose attempts at correcting the Irish girl's phraseology sometimes diverted Mary beyond bounds; for she was too well instructed not to discern that the teachers were frequently farther astray from accuracy than their pupil. This she failed not to point out, often with so much humour as quite to upset the spinner's gravity, and to provoke unmeasured resentment on the part of the mortified persons, which they usually contrived to wreak upon poor Katy, as the most effectual way of making Mary excessively angry. Her occasional reports of these matters, cautiously as they were given, convinced her grandmother that she was in a very unsafe position between the two parties, as regarded her own humility and forbearance; but Katy became, from her recitals, an object of such interest to the household, that no one could wish to check Mary in her generous line of conduct towards the poor desolate little creature.

There was a press of work; nobody could afford to go home to breakfast, even of those who lived like the Greens, within five minutes' run of the mill; and all took their cans, Mary's always replenished with bread and milk, Katy's with sometimes a spoonful of strabout, sometimes a broken crust, and not unfrequently empty.

"What are you doing there at my can, you little meddling fool?" said a big girl to Katy one morning.

"Sure, then, 'tish't your can I'm touching, at all; 'tis Miss Mary's own."

"Miss Mary forsooth! Why don't you say Lady Mary?"

"Lady Mary's can," repeated Katy, with great simplicity.

An immoderate roar of laughter followed, in which the spinner joined; Katy blushed, and looked indignant, for she was sure the laugh was at her expense. Just then, Mary returned to her frame from the farther end of the apartment, and a general shout was raised of, "Room for Lady Mary."

"What's all this riot about," said the overlooker, approaching with no gentle

aspect, "take care you don't get some sauce to your breakfasts," and he drew a strap that he was preparing to fix to some part of the machinery through his fingers.

"What does this mean?" asked Mary, in a louder tone than was prudent.

"Hush!" whispered Katy, "it's a bobbing we'll get, ma'am, if we ben't quiet."

"A bobbing!"

"Yes; that's a strapping; a very sore thing it is." And the little girl writhed as if under the recollection of such discipline.

"Nobody shall bobby me, Katy; and nobody shall bobby you; so make yourself easy. How nicely you have picked my mess! it was all over flue, for I saw it: come, let's see, what have you got for yourself?"

"Mine's all done, Miss," and she showed her empty tin; it had evidently contained nothing but water, a few drops of which had trickled down the sides.

"Here now, hold it quick, Katy, I have plenty to spare."

"Oh no, Miss, avourneen, I've had all I want, and why should I be after robbing you?"

"Do as I bid you: there, sup it up: I wonder," she added, looking round, "which of all you would have refused it."

To this challenge no reply was given, but it excited much anger, and before the day was past Mary was made to feel it through her poor little friend.

Many of our greatest blessings, the deprivation of which would rob life of its best earthly comforts, are enjoyed from day to day without a thought on the peculiar mercy that makes them ours; or an attempt at computing the amount of painful loss that their withdrawal would entail upon us. Among these every-day advantages is the protection afforded by those equal laws that recognize the right of Englishmen of every class, every age, to the fullest protection both of person and property. Those enactments which make the rich man's house his castle embrace with equal efficiency the poor man's hovel. The former is guarded from depredations which the latter might, by dint of physical force, commit; and he in his turn is alike shielded from any despotic use that his more lordly neighbour might be disposed to make of superior wealth and influence. Even the domestic sanctuary is overshadowed

owed by this all-pervading genius of our beautiful constitution; and if the prescribed prerogative of parent or husband overpass its legitimate bounds, and offer violence to that immaculate principle, the liberty of the subject, magisterial authority steps in to arrest the uplifted hand by the certainty of retributive infliction should the blow fall; or with that infliction if it has actually fallen.

Is there any exemption from this privilege of protection among our country people in the bosom of their own free England? Does slavery, such as our law repudiates, and to which the very act of inhaling British air is supposed to be fatal, dwell and reign over thousands in our most public, most populous cities? This question must be answered by an appeal to facts: and should the charge that so it is substantiated by the evidence adduced, the next inquiry is, Shall this state of things be allowed to continue?

CHAPTER IX.

INCREASING TROUBLES.

A SHORT period sufficed to show the widow Green the nature of the difficulties in which she had been plunged, in common with thousands more; and which utterly defied her skill when she cast about for some means of extrication. The gradual decline of many comforts, the increase of privation, and pressure of anxiety as regarded worldly things, were felt as flesh will feel them. The consciousness of having been deceived, entrapped, and fraudulently expatriated from the scene of long respectability and the bosom of a friendly neighbourhood, wounded her natural feelings, and mortified the pride that constantly lurks in every human heart. But these were light afflictions indeed compared with the poignancy of her self-reproach when contemplating, as she was compelled to do, the change that came over the children of her love. Helen was evidently unhappy, and as evidently strove to conceal from her the cause of her dejection, while positively denying that it arose from bodily fatigue or illness; a line

of conduct so inconsistent with the ingenuous character of the girl, as to create involuntary misgivings, wrongful to their object, but of which she was happily ignorant. Mary was becoming proud and passionate to a degree that called for frequent rebukes, and these again seemed to add fuel to the fire of her unholy feelings, or were met with a levity even more distressing still in the eyes of her pious grandmother. Willy appeared to lose the childish simplicity of his character; he, the petted lamb of her little flock, now seemed to shrink from her eye; and the laugh excited by his whispered communications to Mary or James, was cautiously checked as soon as it attracted her observation. This rankled in her bosom more painfully than any thing else, for she could not bear to lose his loving confidence, to see him stealing away from her side, and desirous of evading the queries of anxious affection; nor did she like to confess to herself that the sly leer of bold cunning was supplanting the bright open look of innocent animation which had always marked his clear blue eye. To rescue him, at least, was the desire of her heart; but then how could she effect it? There was no alternative but removal to another mill, or utter idleness. The last, she knew, would prove as ruinous to his morals in such a neighbourhood, as the place he was employed in could do; besides losing the care which Parkins had promised to bestow on him in his present situation. Then her circumstances forbade the subtraction of a penny from their poor income, already falling far short of their expenditure, and warning her that she must look out for a yet more humble abode, ere the remnant of her scanty purse, so sadly lightened since she left her village home, was wholly gone.

James alone retained the characteristics that had but a while ago distinguished them all; but his bodily health declined with a rapidity that startled her. His appetite remained, and many a morsel did she contrive to spare from the cravings of her own stomach to replenish his plate; but the food seemed to impart no nourishment; he became more pallid, more languid and enfeebled, as she looked for the reverse. He was uncomplaining, nevertheless; mild, dutiful, and affectionate.

His Bible became more precious, and though he never reproved the waywardness of Mary, or noticed the change in Willy, he evidently strove to supply their lack of attention to their aged friend. To Helen his attachment seemed always on the increase; and of the few smiles that lighted up her thoughtful countenance, the greater number were drawn forth by the poor boy's endeavours to fix her attention on cheering subjects. Insensibly he became the chief bond of union among them; for though Mary frequently wreaked her peevishness on him, and Willy resented his discouraging looks when he indulged in bad language among themselves, his meek endurance disarmed all unfriendly feeling, and the invalid was dearly loved by all.

Matters proceeded thus, without any material change, for some weeks. Occasionally they visited Sarah, whose mind had evidently been awakened to the importance of spiritual things, though her knowledge was yet very scanty, and her fears strong. About two months after the entrance of the children on their employment in the mills, Sarah's birthday occurred; and, as it fell on a Saturday, when they left work earlier than on other days, the widow could not refuse the poor girl's earnest request that they would all join in celebrating it. It was the first time the two families had assembled since the Greens had quitted that abode, and great appeared the change produced on some of the party, in the eyes of their common parent. Sarah had been dressed with some care, and of course looked better; but the chief alteration appeared in her countenance, which, from being distressingly vacant, had become animated, even to restlessness. She seemed to watch for every word that fell, as if it might convey some new information to her mind; and the dread of her mother, which formerly kept her silent, was so far diminished as to render her frowns and ill-natured speeches ineffectual to check the girl's occasional remarks. Charles of course encouraged her in the unwonted freedom of talking, to annoy his mother. Willy soon got into a corner with his youngest cousin, and they remained apart from the rest, in noisy mirth, which on Willy's part seemed to increase whenever his grandmother

called him to order. Mary had an air of importance about her, that evidently amused Charles, who said many ridiculous things, in a complimentary strain, to increase it; and the sickness of James' looks was rendered more conspicuous by the compassionate remarks they drew forth from his aunt.

But nothing struck the widow so much as the extraordinary change in Helen's aspect. On their entrance, she had noticed an encounter of glances between her and Phœbe, marked on the part of the latter by a degree of scornful, malicious derision that could not escape the notice of the most heedless looker-on; while Helen's usual expression of retiring modesty gave place to one strangely foreign from her natural aspect. On meeting Phœbe's half-opened eyes, her own expanded, and fixed in a gaze almost a stare of proud and high defiance, under which the other presently quailed, though the contemptuous curl of her lip, as she dropped the long lashes, gave her the aspect of disgust, rather than of conscious guilt. Still Helen flinched not: her eyes were riveted on the downcast face, and she stood erect, the very personification of indignant, haughty disdain. Could it be Helen Fleetwood,—the gentle, retiring maiden, the subdued young Christian, to whom even the aged pilgrim secretly looked up as a pattern of that "meekness of wisdom" which she had prayerfully inculcated, and praisefully marvelled at, as its growth exceeded her most sanguine hopes? the enigma was no less painful than strange; nor did her perplexity decrease when Helen, who was generally the last to speak, and whose soft tones fell almost whisperingly on the ear, abruptly turned, without advancing from her position right over against Phœbe, and addressing the poor sick girl, said, in a full, firm voice, "My dearest Sarah, has the Lord given you better health since I saw you last?"

"Yes, Helen dear, I am really better, thank you,"

Helen had again turned to Phœbe, and watched her for a moment after this reply was given; then with a half smile, and a slight toss of the head, she crossed over to the invalid, saluted her affectionately, and in a tone more like her wonted one, but still much louder than usual, said "It is

God, not me, you should thank, dear Sarah, who has brought you to see this day: and that he may grant you many more happy returns of it I heartily beseech him." She then took off her bonnet, adjusted her hair, and sat down with the same air of independent self-possession.

"Dear!" said Mrs. Wright, with affected admiration, "how soon some people rub off their rust in the mills?"

A suppressed titter from Charles was the only notice taken of this; and his mother resumed, "Mary looks as uppish too as any body: quite a change, I declare."

"To be sure," replied Charles, "who would not feel their own respectability, and be proud of it, among such a ragamuffin set as we factory people are?"

"Pride," said the widow, "was not made for man, in any station; and least of all for humble day-labourers like us."

No answer was given; and matters went on much as has been described, until Wright's entrance, with some cakes, gave signal for the tea-table to be surrounded. A restraint was evident on all the party except Helen and Sarah, who took and kept the lead in conversation. There seemed to be an understanding between them that puzzled the widow, and excessively annoyed Mrs. Wright.

"It's a long while since I had so many friends about me on a birth-day," said Sarah.

"That's false," retorted her mother; "but I dare say you reckon one new friend as good as two old ones."

"The oldest friend I have, mother, is the newest to me; and worth a hundred others."

The party looked at her with astonishment; only three of them understood the paradox, and to them it was a source of deep joy. A glance passed between Phœbe and her mother, the purport of which was caught by Charles, whose face almost blackened with anger as he scowled at them both.

"That Friend," observed Helen, "will never leave you nor forsake you."

Mrs. Wright's rage here broke forth: "Upon my word, young woman, this isn't to be borne. You, a beggarly stranger, come here by my mother's means; and set yourself up to be a better friend to that

poor foolish girl than her own flesh and blood! Such impudence!"—

"It was not of myself I spoke, ma'am," replied Helen quietly.

"And pray, ma'am, if a body may be so bold as to ask, who was it?"

"Jesus Christ," answered Sarah.

"Hold your crazy tongue, you idiot," vociferated Mrs. Wright; "must you turn canting hypocrite too?"

The widow interposed, for she saw a storm gathering in the countenance of Charles. "Daughter, that blessed name speaks only of love, peace, and joy: let it not be made an occasion of strife."

"My maxim," said Wright, "is that there can be no quarrelling except two people agree to it: and I hardly think there are two in this little family party to agree to make poor Sarah's birth-day an uncomfortable day to her. So now let's have an end of all squabbles."

Calm was restored; but no change came over Helen. She retained the same air of conscious superiority, fixing, from time to time, the same full, undaunted gaze upon Phœbe, and frequently addressing Sarah in terms of fondness. Charles never once looked at her, neither did Phœbe, but every sound of her voice appeared to bring a sly sneer on the girl's face; which was indeed formed to wear such an expression.

All this distressed the widow Green. She looked round upon her children, and in none could she trace any thing wherein to rejoice, save in James and Sarah; both of whom were evidently fading like summer blossoms. She thought of past scenes: of her little cottage with its plain white walls, the honeysuckle that clustered around the casement; the song of birds from a neighbouring thicket; and the bright faces, the clear merry voices within, that harmonized so sweetly with them. Again her thoughts reverted to the old churchyard, where her dear Richard was perhaps even then slowly tracing the pathway near his parents' grave, on the return from a day's healthful labour in his native fields. She dwelt on the promise of his character, the hope that in after years he would prove a valuable servant of that Master in whose fear and love she had carefully trained him: and as this

bright picture of her mind darkened with the contrast of the reality then before her, tears swelled in her eyes, and her spirit almost breathed the murmuring inquiry, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?"

Helen marked her emotion; and it was happy for herself that she did. Even the pang which at that moment rang the widow's bosom was among the "all things" that worked for good to those afflicted children of God. Oh, if it was given to such to know the end from the beginning, how lovely in their eyes would be the most affrighting of dispensations, seeing that each is shaped to promote that end of their faith—the salvation of their souls, the meetness that must be wrought in them for the incorruptible inheritance already prepared! But the tree of forbidden knowledge was a tree of spiritual darkness, ignorance, and sorrow: it opens man's eyes to present afflictions, but closes them against the peaceable fruits of righteousness that spring therefrom, when once he has been made a partaker in the faith and hope of the gospel.

When the time for speaking of going home had arrived, Helen inquired of Sarah whether she did not wish them to sing before they parted; an assent was given, but with a flush on the cheek and a look of evident anxiety. Helen waited not any farther encouragement; she called the children to her, and at once took the lead in that exquisite hymn,

Jesus, and shall it ever be
A mortal man ashamed of thee!

Often had the solemn strain resounded from the walls of their distant cottage; often had it been carolled on the cliff that overhung their romantic sea-view; and within their antique church it was a favourite selection with Mr. Barlow; but never had the widow Green heard it breathed in tones so thrilling as those which now issued from the lips of her foster-child. The voice of the girl lost none of its sweetness; but there was a fulness, a depth, a fervency, and a solemn pathos added, that struck every hearer as something extraordinary. They sang it throughout; and in the last verse but one, the feeble voice of Sarah tremblingly joined them, gathering strength until the concluding lines—

And Oh, may this my portion be—
That Saviour not ashamed of me!

were given with unrestrained energy by six voices, including the widow.

A deep silence followed, which was strangely broken by a forced hysterical laugh from Phoebe, while at the same moment Charles quitted the room, slamming the door violently after him. No notice was taken, and the party soon separated, Helen's last look, ere she passed out, being fixed on Phoebe, who had, however, turned her back immediately after bidding Mrs. Green good night.

James was greatly fatigued; Willy scarcely able to keep awake through their evening devotions; and the widow soon found herself alone with Helen, to whom she resolved at once to speak on the subject of her inexplicable conduct: but before she could open it, the girl suddenly sank on her knees, threw her arms around her, and burst into a violent fit of weeping. Although trembling with the anticipations of something very distressing, the old woman forbore to check this burst of natural feeling. She pressed poor Helen's head to her shoulder, and allowed her to sob without restraint, until, looking up, she exclaimed, "My granny, my own best and only friend, I have added to your troubles by trying to avoid it: forgive me—I would not have concealed anything from you only that I knew it would grieve you: but I saw by your looks this evening how sad you felt, and that my behaviour distressed you. I will now tell you all."

"Compose yourself first my love: you have been sadly excited this evening, and that is a thing you are not used to."

"Not till I came to the mills, granny: but now I am indeed used to it. Oh, you don't know," she added with a fresh burst of tears, "what it has cost me to keep it all to myself; and already I feel happier since I told you even thus much."

"But did you not tell it to a better Friend, Helen?"

"I did indeed: how else could I have held out? But, granny, it is hard to walk by faith, always resting upon what one cannot see, with none upon earth to pity and console us."

The widow felt that it was; yet wondered that Helen should have deprived herself of the sympathy and counsel so

readily at hand in her own home. She waited however, and the girl, who seemed to have now lost all power of hesitating, proceeded to repeat her tale. To give it in full, as she related it to her maternal friend would be neither useful nor judicious: but the outline was as follows.

After a course of persecution such as has been already described, a new and most harassing attack upon her feelings commenced, owing to a discovery made by Phæbe, that Sarah was in the habit of sending her messages, and receiving answers on religious subjects. Charles was the bearer of little bits of paper, open, on which he had scrawled at the poor maimed girl's desire, short questions; in reply to which Helen sometimes had to note down references to passages of scripture: and this she did the more readily, because he would have to read them to Sarah. It was done in an open manner, in presence of whoever might be at hand, and never without some witnesses: yet from it Phæbe had pretended to draw an inference injurious to Helen's good name; and on this base assumption of her own contriving she openly pointed her out as an unprincipled, profligate character. The insults to which she was now exposed were more trying than any that she had before encountered, and the more so because she could not at first discover their origin. On the preceding day, she had become acquainted with it, and also learned that Sarah was partly aware of the cruel persecution to which her christian efforts for that poor girl's instruction had exposed her. Astonished and indignant at the wanton wickedness of her slanderers, Helen had openly demanded from Charles the contradiction which he was bound to give; but he evaded the subject, and Phæbe loudly declared that if she dared to enter their house that evening, or if, being obliged to go, she opened her lips on any topic connected with religion, or tried to lead Sarah to it, she would directly expose her to the family, and get her driven out in disgrace, from the home she had intruded into. The young people about them had applauded this; and told Phæbe if she had spirit to do what she threatened, it must be a benefit some way: for that either Helen's hypocrisy would then be exposed, or else she must leave

off pretending to be better than she was. Phæbe pledged herself to carry it out; and promised to bring them a full account of the matter on the following Monday.

"So, granny, when we went in this evening," continued Helen, "I had this before me, that whichever way it went, I must suffer. I don't know how it was, but feeling myself to be innocent of such bad conduct as they charge me with, and knowing too that Phæbe herself is as wicked as any body, and that all their spite against me is only because I care for the soul of that poor dear dying girl, I felt something come over me that I am afraid was pride. I did not fear Phæbe, nor any one else; I wished her to see that I did not, and I almost desired her to do the worst she could against me, because I was sure God would not suffer such wickedness to triumph. I also wanted to show poor Sarah that they had neither frightened nor shamed me; but I saw you observed me; and when you looked so sad at tea, and the tears came into your eyes, it struck me that you might suspect something wrong, and be fretting about me. So I resolved to tell you all. And now don't fear; for though God knows my simpleness and my faults are not hid from him, he also knows that I have not given occasion for this: he will make my righteousness as clear as light, and my just dealing as the noonday. And oh, what a blessed thought it is that while they revile me and persecute me, and say all manner of evil against me, falsely, it is for the Lord's sake, because I am trying to do his work, in bringing a poor wounded, straying lamb to the bosom of the good Shepherd!"

The widow answered tenderly and soothingly, confirming this trust in the Lord, and wisely deferring to a calmer moment the cautions that she saw were needed. She was confounded at the exposure of such heartless depravity on the part of her own grand-children, and fully aware of the peril in which Helen was placed; she was also startled at discovering in the girl's character strong traits of high spirit and enthusiastic feeling, where all had appeared so quiet, so humble, almost too timid and shrinking for the necessary conflicts of life; and she felt the need of a double portion of the wisdom which cometh from above, to direct her in the dif-

fiicult task of counselling one so circumstanced. Her mind was in one sense greatly relieved by the confidence of her adopted child, thus restored to her; but many and sharp were the thorns of perplexity this night added to those which had long strown her pillow.

The following day brought her farther acquainted with the extent of the factory evils; for on her telling Helen that if the persecution continued she would make an appeal to the justice and humanity of the managers, the latter replied that it was useless so to do: since in anything which did not concern the interests of the mill they would never interfere. "But," returned the widow, "the interests of the mill are nearly concerned in this; for how can they expect such a set of immoral unprincipled young people to do their duty by their employers? They must surely be idle; and not to be trusted for a moment when the master's eye is off them."

Helen shook her head: "If it was to depend on ourselves and each other, granny, we might be idle: but you forget we have to work along with the machinery. *That* is never idle; it goes on, on, on, and we must keep pace with it. Our fingers are employed and our feet too; but our tongues are free, and all the mischief that bad tongues, prompted by evil hearts, can do, is carried on, to the ruin of the work people, but not to the hindrance of the work. All that the overlookers care for is to see every body feeding the engines, or drawing out the cotton, winding, piecening and all the rest of the business. And besides"—she hesitated, looked more distressed, and then added, "You are greatly mistaken if you think the men who overlook our work care for our morals—they themselves are often among the worst of the bad."

"Is it possible?" asked the widow, while a chill of horror crept over her.

"In our mill it is so, as I know right well."

"Then, Helen, I will remove you from it."

"I am afraid, granny, that would be useless. I thought about it often myself; but there is so much acquaintance among the work-people through the town that a bad report of me raised in one mill would follow me to another, and I should only

have the same battle to fight over again, with the disadvantage of having been driven out of my first place. No, let me stand my ground, and strive by well doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish people; for indeed ignorance is the root of it all. Poor things! they have not been taught their duty, and how should they know it? What do Phœbe and Charles ever hear at home, to strengthen them against the bad examples that they have been exposed to ever since they were mere babes? and yet theirs is a respectable home, and they don't go back, like many others, to find their parents drunk and fighting; and though Mr. Wright does not look after them as he might do, still I cannot think he would allow them to go to the gin shop if he knew of it."

"The gin shop!"

"Yes: they all drink, particularly Johnny, and that is what makes him so stupid, for his work is not very hard."

"Oh, what have I done," groaned the widow, "in bringing you here!"

"Perhaps it is for good, dearest granny; indeed I am sure of that with respect to poor Sarah; and who can tell what others may be the better for it?"

"Blessings on you, my Helen, for the comfort you give me—you, who might well reproach and upbraid me. But how, my poor child, will you meet these cruel people to-morrow?"

"In the strength of a good conscience, and trusting that as I am not ashamed to confess the Lord before men, he will not be ashamed of me."

"But be very watchful, love, over your own heart: spiritual pride sometimes springs up very unexpectedly, where worldly pride has been cut down; and the deceitfulness of our nature helps to keep us ignorant that it is as bad a weed as the other."

"I never had much worldly pride, had I, granny? except indeed the pride of a good name, which I did not know the value of in my own sight till—till," she sobbed, "till they took it from me."

"No, Helen, they have not taken it from you, nor ever shall," replied the widow with rising indignation. "We live in happy England, where the laws are made for poor as well as for rich; and one of

those laws protects an honest person's good name against slander. But we will not talk of that now: let us rather seek for direction in the word of God; and depend upon it matters are not so bad even in the factories, that I should not see you righted if this goes on."

Helen sighed: she somehow felt that for her there was no help in man; but she said nothing to discourage her more sanguine friend.

Meanwhile, the widow Green secretly resolved to act at once upon what she had discovered; and to obtain for the innocent girl that protection which she was very sure no man with an English heart in his bosom could withhold, when made acquainted with the circumstances.

Did she calculate rightly? We shall see.

CHAPTER X.

A SEARCH AFTER JUSTICE.

ON the following evening the widow watched with much more than her wonted solicitude the countenance of poor Helen on her return from the scene of trial. It was pallid, downcast, and sad, expressive of calm resignation, such as had ever been its aspect under the few clouds of sorrow that had crossed her peaceful path. When alone, the old woman eagerly questioned her as to the reception she met in the work-room.

"Something different from what I expected, granny; for it did not occur to me that Phœbe would tell a downright falsehood, because there was nobody but me to contradict her. She made them believe that I had been put to shame before the whole family, adding that of course I would deny it. I saw it would be useless to do so, and therefore only told her privately there was One to judge between us, who had declared he would put the lying lips to silence. After that, I bore without speaking all their mocks and reproaches. I felt that I was too helpless to vindicate the holy cause of religion which they were attacking through me; so I se-

cretly committed it to God, and myself too; beseeching him to clear my character so far as the evil they spoke of me affected his name and glory."

"And did no one take your part, my poor child?"

"There is not much feeling in a mill, dear granny. You have often told us that sin hardens the heart, and it is too true. All the labourers there do not perhaps join in open wickedness, but they see and hear so much of it, that without they have the fear and love of God in them, they are like the giddy children down in our own dear place at home, playing among the newly-tarred fishing boats, as I have often seen, reminding me when I looked at their smeared skins, of the text, 'Who can touch pitch and not be defiled?' So it is with the factory children."

"But, surely some of them must know right from wrong?"

"If they have been taught to do so, they either forget it or cease to regard the difference. The truth is, if I was as bad as they would make me out, and ten times worse, it would not bring on me any ill-will. It is my trying to keep myself unspotted from that wicked little world, granny, and refusing to partake in their sins, that makes them spiteful. It is not me they hate, but the holiness which I strive to follow, because without it I shall not see the Lord."

"Follow it still, my Helen, for he who has called you to do so will most certainly give you the needful power. Is not his word full of precious promises to that effect?"

"Indeed, dear granny, indeed it is! I doubt whether in all your long life you found them so precious as I did to day, when trying to 'keep my mouth as it were with a bridle;' and the more I felt the comfort and support of God's presence, the more my heart bled for the poor ignorant desperate creatures about me, whom Satan was leading captive at his will. I could not be angry with them if I had tried. Oh, it is a dreadful thing to see so many poor children given up to learn all manner of wickedness, with nobody to care for their souls! I would not be a mill-owner, granny; no, not for the worth of all the manufactures in England. I could have fallen on my knees in the midst of

that crowded room to bless God that I was a poor despised factory-girl, and not an employer. Aye, and I would almost sooner be the worst among those wretched characters, with none to teach or guide me, than the person who, with knowledge and opportunities, and a BIBLE IN THE HOUSE, has to answer to God for letting those souls perish, while their poor bodies are worn out by hard and cruel labour to swell his unholy gains!"

The girl's cheek beamed with the hectic flush of indignation as she vehemently uttered these words. Her own wrongs moved her not as the deeper injuries inflicted on her persecutors moved her. She paused but for a moment, and then resumed.

"Mr. Z. I know, has daughters growing up: would he send them among us for an hour every day? Not he. He knows too well that their health would be destroyed by staying even so long in the heat, the steam, the stench and the dust of rooms where we are pent up from early morning to late night; and he knows that they would never again be let into respectable society if they were supposed to hear the vile, filthy talk that his poor labourers use, and the men he sets over them encourage; and which he never dreams of checking, either by his own presence, or by setting any moral, not to say religious person, to watch them. I wonder if Mr. Z. thinks there are two heavens, one for masters, another for slaves; or how he expects to escape the reproaches of his victims, if both should meet in the place where God has declared that the covetous as well as the abominable shall go!"

"Helen, my love," said the widow, who trembled at the picture placed before her, "let us drop this fearful subject for to-night. We, who have for ourselves strong consolation, having fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us in the gospel, will now intercede for the unhappy beings of whom you speak. All mill-owners are not alike: some pious and humane men may be found among them, and God can increase the number. Let us pray him so to do."

Helen was soon wrapped in the heavy slumber induced by over-exertion; while the aged woman gazed on her flushed

cheeks, and watched the catching of her unequal breath, with sorrow embittered by self-reproach. She then stole to the couch where Willy and James reposed, the former apparently disturbed by some irritating dream, his knitted brow, curled lip, and the soiled fist that lay clenched on the pillow presenting a strange contrast to the corpse-like beauty of his brother's tranquil countenance, pale as the snow-drop, unruffled and serene; and the delicate hand that rested on a little hymn-book, Richard's parting gift, which James treasured above all earthly things except his Bible. Beside this bed the widow knelt and prayed and wept; and then repaired to Mary's little mattress, with a caution that proved needless, for Mary was awake. In answer to the inquiry whether any thing ailed her, she said, "No; but I heard a fine speech from Helen, and could not sleep for thinking about it. She spoke so loud, I heard every word; and I only wish Mr. Z. had heard it too. But, granny, what have they been doing to Helen; I don't wonder at their teasing me, who often provoke them; but she is so quiet, and good, and wise, what fault do they find with her? Oh, I can tell, myself. It is because being quiet and good and wise are faults in a mill. Miss Phœbe Wright is just a pattern there; and our sweet Helen a disgrace."

"Remember, Mary, that poor Phœbe is as nearly related to me as you are."

"So much the worse for her; she is the more bound to take example by you, and to follow your good advice, granny; but instead of that she tries to set us against you, and to make us ashamed of being obedient. She flattered me, and would have soon made me unkind to Helen, only I found her out in time, and all by means of my poor child."

"Your child!"

"Yes, my little scavenger Katy," said Mary, rising in the bed, and settling her night-cap with a consequential air. "Sit down here, granny, and I will tell you something that will put you in a rage."

"Fie, Mary, how often have I blamed you for that expression."

"Well then, something to shock you. Lean down, granny, to rest your dear back, or I can't talk comfortably," added the affectionate child, "for I am sure you

have enough to tire you, inside and out." Then throwing her arms round the neck of the old woman, she added, "No; nobody shall ever make me undutiful, or ungrateful, or unkind to you, my dear, fond, granny!"

Nobody could long look cold on little Mary; she was so ardent, so open, so straightforward; and withal so loving to those who possessed her regard, that it was difficult to throw a rein on her impetuosity, whatever direction it might take. The poor widow felt that some attempt had been made to alienate this warm heart from her, and that its failure had produced a corresponding reaction in her favour. Inwardly rejoicing at this, she returned the embrace, and expressed her readiness to hear whatever Mary had to communicate.

"You know all about Kate Malony, dear granny; that is, all that I knew: but now it comes out her father is in a consumption, and can't work a hand's turn; and little Katy's small earnings is all they have in the world to keep them alive. A half-penny to buy a sup of milk, as she calls it for her father, is a great matter to Katy; and Phœbe, who has more money than she comes by honestly—oh, don't look so displeased, granny; I only say what every body else says—Phœbe has given Katy a half-penny now and then of late, till the poor child, and I too, thought her a great friend to her. Well, at last Phœbe tried to put it into my head to be envious of Helen, saying how rich my little Katy and her father would think themselves if they had half or a quarter of what you bestow, as she says, on a proud stranger; and often she pointed out poor starving objects, all in tatters, and said, what false charity it is to keep one beggar like a lady, and let so many want a morsel to eat or a rag to cover them."

"And did she really say all this to you?"

"Not all at once: she dropped the remarks somehow, in a way that prevented my taking fright at them, and I think she would have brought me round, only she let it out to Katy, by giving her money, and telling her if she would help to set me against Helen, and get me to plague you, she would give her more. So Katy, not knowing what to think, asked me to-day what sort of a granny I had; and then I

told her how you had been both mother and father, and every thing to us, and to poor Helen, whose father was drowned, and her mother and the little baby died of grief, and left her to depend on strangers. Then Katy began to cry, and said, 'Musha! Miss Mary dear, is it me that shall speak the bad word to set you against the blessed woman?' And so she told me all; and, granny, I could not sleep for thinking how wicked Phœbe is; and I heard Helen speaking loud and laying the blame on the people who wont teach the poor factory children any better. I think she is right; for if they pay us to stop away from our own homes and work for them, they ought to take care we are not taught wickedness at the mills. Instead of that, granny, the very worst mark you can have on you there, is to seem not quite so bad as the rest."

The widow stifled the anguish of her spirit at this new evidence of the horrors to which she had unwittingly exposed her sacred charge. She talked earnestly to Mary, directing her anew to the source of all wisdom and the only anchor of safety. She represented to her the great responsibility resulting from a scriptural education; the blessing that she might become, as a little leaven in a lump where leaven was rarely found. She ended with a short prayer, and left the warm-hearted child composed to sleep.

But what a tumult of distressing thoughts crowded on her own mind! No way of escape appeared, but escape, she thought, they must, from such a scene of depravity. Again she summed up her expenditure, balancing it against her slender means, and ended by resolving to take on the morrow a decided step towards that reduction which must precede any attempts at removing even one of the children. Accordingly she communicated to the landlord her purpose of seeking a more humble abode, and he, commending her prudence, told her of one where she would be at very little cost; in a large house, partly dilapidated and marked for pulling down, the rooms in which were, in the interim, let out to families such as hers; and she might procure a good one for half the price she paid him. Objections presented themselves, but necessity overruled them, and as her landlord had

just had the offer of a good permanent tenant to succeed her, he readily forgave a week's notice and expedited the removal. The evening of the second day after this, found the family for the first time in their lives restrained to a single apartment, large, sombre, dreary-looking, with a little rusty stove standing alone in the midst of a spacious fire-place, whence the proper fittings had been removed, leaving a black, broken chasm, down which the wind threatened to rush unimpeded. But the bleak season was still far off; and the poor widow resolved to let the morrow take thought for the things of itself. As yet she was not in debt; she had taken a step towards avoiding it; and, as the two crazy bedsteads were a real bargain, and the four rickety chairs lent by the new landlord, and the small table picked up with the bedsteads at a broker's sale for next to nothing, she had really cause to congratulate herself, while unpacking and arranging her own bedding, and other remnants of the cottage furniture.

James praised every thing, as though they had taken up a superior abode; and when the others rushed in from the mills, even the dark old walls seemed to smile with the reflection of their happy faces; for particularly happy they must needs look to satisfy dear granny they felt no privation in the change.

A few questions privately put to Helen and Mary convinced the widow that matters were proceeding from bad to worse in the mill. The former admitted that she was unceasingly harassed; the latter betrayed the fact of having, in spite of all admonitory cautions, embroiled herself to a great extent in defending Katy from the ill-nature stirred up by Phœbe, to whom the little girl had returned the princely bribe of three half-pence, with a simple speech, the purport of which was suggested by Mary, setting forth that she would not sell her conscience or her friend. This procured for the little orator a slap on the face; and when Mary flew to interfere, she was saluted by the title of "granny," and complimented on so soon following the old lady's example, by taking a beggar under her protection, and teaching her to talk cant. The laugh was against her; and this galled her more than severe persecution could have done. The spin-

ner too had joined in it; and however trifling in itself, the widow plainly saw the beginnings of great harm to Mary.

"What can possibly make Phœbe so spiteful against us?" asked the little girl. "It must be the same feeling that made Cain slay Abel, 'because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.'"

The widow was silent; she felt that so it must be; he that is born after the flesh is ever disposed to persecute him that is born after the Spirit; and where the restraints of education and refinement are wanting, this inclination will show itself, particularly where godliness with the powerful though silent eloquence of a holy walk rebukes vice and profanity. Phœbe was evidently a depraved character; such alas! are to be found in every place; but Phœbe was placed in a sphere where multitudes united to discountenance virtue, while none interposed the powerful check of authority or influence, to uphold even an outward decorum of manners. The voice of reproof is an abomination to the scorner; it will not be brooked in a community of scorners, unless backed by something tending to overawe their unruly spirits. The system, the factory system, under which Phœbe Wright had imbibed the peculiar wickedness that now pervaded her character, also fed the evil, guarded it, and armed it with power to wound whatever excited its enmity. The factory system surrounded her with associates, by whom she had been encouraged in the ways of daring sin, and who were in turn encouraged by her to unite against any one whose uprightness of principle should tacitly condemn them. A few there were, whose souls loathed the scenes that hourly vexed them; but what could they do? Silent endurance was their only refuge; and even this was enough to subject them to ill-will, unless they either feigned excess of stupidity, or baffled suspicion by pretending to be like the rest.

Excluded from the free air, and almost from the pure light of day; shut up in an atmosphere polluted by clouds of fetid breath, and all the sickening exhalations of a crowded human mass, whose unwashed, overworked bodies were also in many cases diseased, and by the suffocating dust that rose on every side; relaxed by an intensity of artificial heat which

their constitutions were never framed to encounter in the temperate clime where God had placed them; doubly fevered, doubly debilitated, by excessive toil, not measured by human capacity to sustain it, but by the power of machinery obeying an inexhaustible impetus; badly clothed, wretchedly fed, and exposed moreover to fasts of unnatural length even from that miserable fare; who can marvel if, under such a system, the robust adult speedily acquires a sickly habit of body, and a morbid state of feeling, leading at once to most awful perversion of mind and corruption of morals? But it is not of adults we are called to speak, it is of children, young, tender, growing children, who require a double portion of rest, refreshment, liberty for the body, and of watchful diligence to direct and guide the mind. If, "Train up a child in the way he should go," be a precept that God himself has vouchsafed to give, as the preliminary to an upright walk through life, oh who could marvel though the little ones so fearfully forced into every way in which they should not go, became in riper years incarnate fiends! The child's stomach, unfitted for long abstinence, and delicately susceptible of injury, becomes doubly disordered by the privation of food and the impurities that find their way into the system from that noxious atmosphere: it loses all desire of wholesome diet, and craves the exciting draught that shall lend a transient stimulus to the frame unstrung by toil, and chilled by sudden transition from the heated pandemonium of the mill to the raw keen air of night; the poor little victim who reels from exhaustion as it enters the gin-shop, reels thence a drunkard.

Such, with its accompaniments of nameless evils, had been the school into which in early childhood the Wrights were entered: the ill-usage of a savage overlooker had shortened Sarah's term of suffering, and unintentionally interposed between her and the career of vice that Phœbe remained to engage in. On the system, the vile, the cruel, the body and soul-murdering system of factory labour, we cannot charge the innate depravity of the human heart; but we do denounce it as being in itself a foul fruit of that depravity under its hateful form of covetousness, and of

being in turn the prolific root of every ill that can unhumanize man, and render an enlightened Christian country the mark of God's most just and holy indignation, provoking him even to blot its place and name from among the nations of the earth.

Impressed with forebodings resulting from the comparatively few discoveries that she had made, and accustomed to obtain a kind if not a respectful hearing whenever she sought counsel or aid of those in a superior rank of life, the widow Green resolved on making known her grievance to the person with whom she had concluded the bargain that had sorely disappointed her. "It may be," thought she, "that want of faithfulness in representing to these people the extent of evils which perhaps they do not suspect, is a part of the cause of their continuance. At least, I will try; and if justice is not to be had from the agent, the employers must be appealed to."

She chose what appeared the best hour, to avoid interrupting business, and with a throbbing heart but a calm countenance, and quiet respectful deportment, presented herself before the desk of Mr. M.

"Well, good woman, what's your business! Have you any younger hands than your own seeking employ?"

"No, sir; I am the widow Green, who came to you on that errand some weeks back."

"Widow Green, Brown, Black, or White, do you think I have a memory for all the colours that pass before me every day? Once more, what's your business?"

The widow was persuaded that he did remember her; and that the discouragingly rude tone was meant to check her communication. She, however, proceeded.

"I came, sir, from the village of L. with a letter to Mr. Z. from a particular friend of his: and in that book is the entry made by you of Helen Fleetwood and Mary Green, as labourers in your mill."

"Ay, I remember something of it now: so you want to put in the boy, you so absurdly kept back. Come; the particulars as quick as you can." He opened the ledger, and dipped the pep, with an expectant, impatient look.

"I am not come to enter the boy, sir, but to acquaint you with some particulars as to the treatment of the girls, which you

ought to know"—the violence with which the open pages were slapped together again, made her start and stammer; and before she could recover her breath the agent broke into a vehement strain of reprimand,—

"What the deuce, woman, do you think I sit here to be pestered with long saws from an old fool like you, because a couple of mawkish parish girls are not treated like countesses in the mill! I guessed as much from the airs you all sported when here before. I thought we should soon have a whine; but make yourself easy as to any thing you will get by it; and take my advice not to provoke, by impertinent intrusions of this sort, something more disagreeable than you or they have calculated on."

Shocked and stunned at the commencement of this ebullition, the old woman recovered her resolution by the time Mr. M. came to a close, and with more firmness and spirit than she had yet exhibited, she retorted, "If these were the plantations, and my children slaves, such language might, or rather must be borne; but, sir, we are in England, and thanks to the laws of this free country, the man who would not be withheld by the fear of God from oppressing his hireling, must render justice, or pay the penalty of breaking these laws."

"Well argued, I protest," said the agent in a jeering way. "But, my dear ma'am, there are other contracts, even in this free country, besides that of holy matrimony, where certain parties having taken each other for better for worse, must abide by the bargain, *volens volens*; and learned as you are in the law, you are doubtless acquainted that such is the case in the matter before us, ma'am."

Doubly indignant at the scoffing manner of the unfeeling man, she quickly rejoined, "Do you never discard your work-people if they break their part of the contract, and prove idle, disorderly, useless incumbances?"

"We have means to prevent their being so," returned Mr. M. drily, and with a knowing nod.

"Yes, you have means to force from your poor little labourers the full measure of toil, and to terrify them into submission, but I have yet to learn that there is no re-

dress for them when writhing under cruelty and wrong."

"You are in a good school for learning many things you don't yet know, my old lass; but be pleased to walk off; for I have thrown away too much time already."

"Yet, sir, hear what I have to say, I beseech you. My intention is not to offend, but to tell you of things that I am sure you cannot be aware of, or they would not be suffered to exist."

"Stuff and nonsense! Things can't go on to please every body; and least of all, I trow, to please all the grandmothers of some thousands of children. Once more, you must be off."

"Then, sir, I will certainly go to Mr. Z."

"Do so."

"And I will use the advantage that his friend's introduction affords me."

"By all means."

"And I must report to him the uncivil reception you have given me."

"Ah, don't be cruel! Think what will become of me, if I am turned out of my respectable situation, and sent to the mill—perhaps to the tread-mill."

A suppressed laugh from behind a slight partition extending along the side of the desk, apprized the widow that others were enjoying the ridicule to which she was subjected. Her heart sank; and as she passed the door-way, tears gushed from her eyes. "I have been too hasty," she mentally said; "I have not preserved the meekness that becomes a Christian. I will go at once to Mr. Z. and plead with him in a better spirit, the Lord helping me. I know he is a father, and he must feel; I know he is a gentleman, and he will not mock a poor old woman for appealing to his heart and conscience, on behalf of two helpless orphans. Yes, I will forget the man's affronts, and give the master no room to upbraid me."

A few minutes' walk brought her to the door; and on inquiring for Mr. Z. she was ushered into his presence.

CHAPTER XI.

FARTHER DISAPPOINTMENTS.

ON their first interview, the widow had seen Mr. Z. in his counting-house, and

under the character of the man of business: she was now at his private dwelling, and after treading with some wonder the chequered marble that graced the spacious hall, and passing between two rising platforms of rare and fragrant exotics that breathed perfume through the house, and crossing a circular space where the light from a lofty dome of glass streamed down on some fine antique statuary, she found herself in an apartment teeming with what to her rustic apprehension appeared the gorgeous magnificence of royalty. It was, indeed, a large and very handsome room, fitted up with no lack either of taste or cost; the crimson drapery bordered and fringed and tasselled with imitative gold; the couches, ottomans, and luxurious chairs; the inlaid cabinets, and fashionable profusion of *bijouterie* that loaded the carved tables, and even the splendid carpet to which her dazzled eyes were soon turned in abashed bewilderment—all produced on the humble dame an effect that for a moment almost obliterated the subject of her visit.

From a folding door, the partial opening of which showed a table glittering with cut glass and silver plate, the accompaniments of the family luncheon, Mr. Z. advanced, and took his station before the fire-place, where a time-piece of exquisite workmanship had just struck some musical chimes from beneath the immense bell-glass that covered its burnished gold. Mr. Z. drew forth a watch of the same precious metal, attached to a guard, and while he regulated the hands according to the time-piece, said:

"You wished to speak to me, I believe?"

"I did, sir; I feel it is a liberty to take with you; but the letter I brought from Mr. Stratton some weeks ago, emboldens me to hope you will overlook it."

"Oh, then, you are the person from L. Haven't they given you work yet?"

"Two of my family, sir, have been employed in your mill from the time I first saw you."

"Well, and what then?"

There was something so freezing in the gentleman's manner, as he threw himself into an easy chair, laid one leg over the other, and fixing his eyes upon the gilt cornice, awaited with imperturbable

nonchalance the reply to this natural question, that poor Mrs. Green lacked heart to make known her business. A minute passed in silence, which was broke by his repeating in the same frigid tone,

"Well, Mrs. Thingimy, what then?"

"I came to you, sir, because I was unable to obtain a hearing from your agent. All that I want is protection for my poor girls against those who are too strong for them." Mr. Z. remained silent and immoveable, and she resumed with more earnestness. "I need not tell you, sir, how important it is to your interests, not to mention a higher motive, that honest and diligent labourers should be encouraged, and not exposed to bad example and ill-usage from others of a contrary character. My children, by God's blessing, are both honest and industrious, and have been carefully kept from evil; but in the place where they are, it is looked on as a sin to be religious, or even modest. I come to beg your interference to save a dear innocent orphan from cruel slander, and unjust persecution.

Mr. Z. turned his face to her, elevated his eye-brows, and looking at a painting that hung above her head, drily remarked, "I fancy here's a mistake, good woman. I am not the manager of the mill."

"But you are the manager's master, sir, and therefore to be appealed to when he refuses redress. Only order an inquiry to be made into the business, and justice to be done, and I will trouble you no farther."

Another silence ensued. A footman then brought in some letters on a silver salver, which Mr. Z. took, and commenced a leisurely examination of the seals and directions. He opened one and read it with deliberation: then, as he folded it, without looking up, said, "Mr. M. is my agent."

"But, sir, Mr. M. refuses to attend to me."

The gentleman was again buried in contemplation over another letter; and the poor widow, as she gazed on him, then glanced at the splendours that surrounded her, began to feel the workings of that spirit which even in the sanctified bosom too often "lusteth to envy." There sat a fellow mortal, as frail a child of earth and of sin as herself; one who had worked his

way, not by the labour of his own hands, but by the toil of others, to the possession of such wealth, and the enjoyment of such luxury, as invested him with a seeming superiority over his brethren of the dust. This, however, she felt was the fruit of enterprise and perseverance; the returns of a great outlay, and as such not to be grudged; but these riches had hardened his heart, had stifled the pleadings of humanity, and made him not only cold and proud, but cruel. "Surely," thought she, "he might tell me at once, and plainly, that he rejects my petition, and bid me go. He ought not to keep me standing here, aged and fatigued as I am, hoping for a more favourable answer, and afraid to lose it by hastily retiring. He wants me to look round, to admire his glittering toys, and to draw a painful contrast between this palace and my own miserable home; he knows that almost any one piece of furniture, which would not be missed out of this room, would be a fortune to me and fit up my poor place with every comfort. Does he want me to covet? would he tempt me to steal?" Such cogitations were passing through the mind of the widow, and she felt them to be the suggestions of a wrong spirit, yet could not stifle them, until the scripture recurred to her mind, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." All was now changed: the contrast that struck her was no longer that of a haughty rich man, glorying in his possessions over a despised, impoverished fellow-creature, who groaned beneath the pressure of present difficulty and anticipated want: but that of a wretched being, who had his portion here, the god of this world having blinded his mind, lest the light of the glorious gospel should shine into it—one to whom the summons might come, "This night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou has provided?"—one of those rich men to whom the Apostle's awful apostrophe was addressed, "Go to, now; weep and howl!"—yes, the contrast was between such a one and herself, poor in worldly goods, but rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven; brought through much tribulation to seek, to know, to love the Lord; having her treasure laid up where neither moth, nor rust, nor thief

could touch it; and knowing that, whatever might be her losses on earth, she had in heaven a better and more enduring substance.

Little did Mr. Z. suspect what thoughts of pity, gradually forming themselves into prayer on his behalf, were occupying the mind of the humble creature who stood patiently awaiting his leisure to speak again. When at last he lifted his eyes and glanced towards her, he met a look so full of benevolence, of unaccountable kindness and concern, that it surprised him out of his affected abstraction, and in a tone of angry expostulation he exclaimed, "Good woman, what, in the name of wonder, keeps you standing there?"

"I was waiting your leave to go on, sir."

"To go on! You have my leave to go out, which is more to the purpose. Very extraordinary! that I am to be pestered with matters that only concern my agent. Pray did he send you to me?"

"No, sir; but Mr. Stratton led me to hope I should find a friend in you."

"Mr. Stratton made a fool of you, for his own purposes. Learn, Mrs. What's-your-name, to know your place; and remember too, that my private residence is not an office." So saying he twitched the bell, and disappeared through the folding doors, as a footman entered, to re-conduct the baffled petitioner by the way she came.

The widow returned to her poor dwelling in a calmer frame of mind than she had quitted it. This resulted from having been driven closer to her Almighty refuge by rebuffs painful to flesh, and such as she had never before experienced, but which rendered doubly sweet to her soul the word of promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." She took her Bible, and read aloud to James, whose thin fingers were busily employed at his work, and the boy thought she had been enjoying some great spiritual privilege, so full did her heart appear of heavenly consolation.

"Ah, my dear child," she observed, when closing the blessed volume, "What a hard case is theirs, who among all the adversities of life know not where to look for such comforts as this book affords to us!"

"I'm sure I don't know, granny, how

they manage ; but they seem to think religion would make their troubles worse, instead of lightening them."

"If they were allowed to put asunder what God has joined, James ;—if they might take the promises and leave the commands, secure happiness without seeking holiness, and serve God and mammon together, we should find a great many who now shun and even revile religion, very willing to take it up. But the cross is what they hate ; pride will not own a crucified Saviour as the only hope, and corruption will not follow Him through trials, in the path of obedience, nor desire the sanctification that would spoil their relish for vain and sinful pleasures."

"Well, granny, I do think, that is I am afraid, it is not so much the Spirit of God as the sickness I feel, that makes me care so little about idle play, and love the Bible as I do."

"My darling boy, sickness alone would not wean your heart from earth, much less would it endear the blessed book to your soul ; but this sickness is the cross that your loving Lord sees good to lay upon you ; and because you are his own dear child, he leads you to seek refreshment at that fountain of life, and to delight in the word, which tells you that poor as you are and helpless, sick, feeble, and sinful, all things are yours, for you are Christ's."

The boy dropped the long silken lashes in which tears had already gathered, and meekly replied, "I am not afraid Jesus will cast me out, granny, for I came to Him because he has invited me, and I am sure he never said what he did not mean."

The widow's heart sang for joy over this simple declaration of a hope that she knew would never, never make the young believer ashamed. How light seemed the affliction which had weighed down her spirit all day, when thus, placed as it were in the balance against it, the exceeding and eternal weight of glory appeared to the eye of faith ! James had never before spoken out, either as to his bodily illness, or the strong hold that his spirit had taken on the promises of the gospel, and she felt how timely was the communication, at once to solemnize and soothe her mind.

But evening came, and brought a renewal of trouble. Helen's face, for the first time, appeared swollen with weeping,

and Mary was in a state of excitement rendered the more evident by her struggles to conceal it. Neither entered into any explanation, but Helen, on being urged to speak, said, "I will no more dissuade you from going to the manager ; for indeed I cannot much longer bear it : the work is getting beyond my strength, and they make it heavier than it need be—all because I will not go along with them in wickedness."

Little did the widow suspect that the fair young girl so tenderly reared by her, to whom even the language of unkindness was never addressed, had that day been cruelly beaten by a ruffian overlooker ! Mary alone knew it.

However, it was evident that some sort of protection must be obtained ; and without divulging to any of the family her past proceedings or farther intentions, Mrs. Green made up her mind to try an appeal to the elder brother of the house of Z. who bore the character of a very domestic man, remarkably fond of his daughters. She had never seen him, as they had been absent, and Mr. Stratton's letter was to the other Z. The house was a little way out of town, the grounds through which she had to pass were beautifully planted ; and the contrast of fresh air, green leaves, bright sunshine and the singing of birds, to the scene she had just quitted, was most reviving. She trod the velvet grass with the elasticity of a younger step ; and her hope brightened as she approached the elegant, but still rural mansion.

She was admitted into the library, a large and cheerful room, of which the long windows opened upon a lawn, diversified with flower-plots. Mr. Z. was attired in a plain loose morning-coat, seated at a table where books and writing materials lay before him ; at a smaller table, near him, was a lovely young lady, seemingly about the age of Helen, employed in painting a group of flowers. The widow's humble curtesy was acknowledged by a slight nod from Mr. Z., and after glancing at her dress, always neat and highly respectable, he told her to sit down.

"At length, then," thought the poor petitioner, as she gratefully obeyed, "at length I have found the right person ; and my suit will be heard."

Encouraged by this belief, she proceeded to state the occasion of her visit; and meeting with no interruption, she entered upon the topic as especially affecting the morals and health of her young charges. She spoke of Helen as a pious, modest, retiring girl, who required nothing more than liberty to remain so, and to pursue her work with the diligence that formed part of her character; but who, because she maintained her integrity among many evil examples, was not only persecuted by her fellow-labourers, but also oppressed, at their instigation, by the people placed in authority over them. All that she sought was an intimation from the superiors of the concern to the men who overlooked the common hands, that they required to have virtue protected, and industry encouraged, instead of the reverse.

During her appeal for Helen, whose orphan state she briefly, but touchingly described, the young lady frequently suspended the operations of her pencil, and listened with looks of kind commiseration: Mr. Z. was silent, and a gloomy expression gathered on his features, which might, however, result from dissatisfaction at hearing of his people's mal-practices. At length, he glanced towards his daughter, and catching one of her compassionate looks directed to the speaker, he abruptly exclaimed, "Amelia, go to your sisters."

She immediately left the room; and no sooner was the door closed than Mr. Z. commenced an angry speech, reprimanding the widow for introducing such improper subjects in the presence of a young lady, whose ears ought not to have been assailed by discourse so unfit for a delicate mind.

"What have I said, sir?" asked the poor woman in amaze: "surely I avoided every word that could be thought improper; and I never spoke of, or alluded to anything indelicate."

"You talked of 'drunkards, swearers, and shameless people,' and drew a picture of misery, dirt and confusion unfit to be heard of in a place like this. It is, let me tell you, no small liberty to come to my house on such an errand at all; but to talk before my daughter is unpardonable."

"Oh, sir, though of very humble rank, my poor Helen is modest and delicate as

you yourself can desire a female to be; and she is obliged to hear and to see in their worst forms, all the evil things that I spoke of, and others that I could not even mention before the young lady. Let this move your compassion for her." But Mr. Z. had worked himself into a passion, for propriety's sake.

"Really, woman, your assurance is matchless! Not content with insulting my daughter by your low conversation, you must now place some dirty factory girl on the same level with her, and thence argue that I am to go, in person of course, and rescue your distressed damsel from the mill!" and he laughed in bitter scorn, as he spoke.

What could the dismayed applicant do to appease him? Every attempt at explanation seemed to aggravate her offence, and at length she rose from her seat; a movement that seemed to impart no small satisfaction to Mr. Z. who quickly pulled the bell, and himself striding across the room, opened the door for her, saying, "I believe you have erred more through ignorance and presumption than any positive wish to offend me: so I shall say no more:—there, go along," he added, slightly touching her arm to expedite her, as, at the encouragement of this more moderate speech she once more strove to address him, "go along, good woman, and learn better manners for the future."

As she followed a servant through the hall, Miss Z., the innocent cause of, or rather pretext for this rude rebuff, came towards her with money in her hand; "I am so sorry for your distress," she gently said, "and perhaps you will accept this trifle to buy a few things for your orphan girl."

"Dear young lady!" replied the widow, "it is not money that I want: but if I could win your father's protection for my poor girls, how thankful I should be!"

"Oh," exclaimed Amelia, looking frightened, "Papa never allows any of us to interfere in the least about the mills—I must not say one word to him on that, because"—here a side door opened, and an elder domestic appeared, who, darting a look of anger at the poor woman, said in a teasy voice, "Miss Amelia, your Mamma wants you directly. Directly, Miss," he repeated impatiently, as the girl was about to finish

her sentence ; and, seemingly with reluctance, she walked away. The man growling in an angry under tone to his fellow servant, "Turn her out at once," followed his young mistress ; and the other, a mere youth, proceeding to the door with Mrs. Green, took occasion to whisper, "You can't succeed here : you'll only make yourself enemies in the mill, by trying to get justice out of it. If the agent isn't your friend, never reckon on any good by coming to the owners ; and our agent is nobody's friend but his own."

What a change comes over the face of creation when sadness weighs down the heart that erewhile "rejoiced in nature's joy ?" The sun shone as brightly, the green turf spread as broadly, the flowers bloomed in an atmosphere as fragrant, and the little birds renewed their carols with glee as unrestrained ; but no response was found in the poor widow's aching bosom to their claims on her glad attention. Sorrow had overwhelmed her spirit, always too sanguine because prone to make her own warm-heartedness the standard of anticipations respecting others. Her last hope had failed ; of the agent, what she had just heard was evidently true, and too plainly the young footman had represented the uselessness of other appeal. Neither of the Messrs. Z. had chosen to enter at all on the subject of her complaint, and it was clear that an excuse had been seized by this gentleman roughly to baffle her suit, as his brother had contemptuously frozen her into silence. Yet there lingered in her mind a sort of incredulity as to the possibility of such a state of things existing in England, simply because it was England. She remembered that Mr. Barlow had once held a meeting of his parishioners, in order to give them an opportunity of petitioning Parliament for the total abolition of slavery in our western colonies ; a gentleman attended, who detailed the wrongs and described the sufferings of the poor negroes, previous to receiving their signatures. On that occasion, a stout old farmer, of the humbler class, was seated near her ; and she could not forget the feverish anxiety with which he awaited permission to write his name. Half rising from the bench, leaning his hands on the knob of a stout oaken staff, every finger trembling with

agitation, while his forehead was streaked with crimson, and his light grey eyes, blood-shot and glistening, seemed ready to start from his head, he stared by turns at the pleader and at the roll of parchment which he held, until the speech was concluded, the petition was spread out, and the ink-stand placed beside it : then he sprang forward with a step that shook the room, and after cutting rather than writing his name on the skin, he returned to his place, drawing the sleeve of his smock-frock across his eyes, and with a sound between a sob and a growl, ejaculating, "Wow ! neighbour Green, the man, woman, or child that wont go on bended knees morning, noon and night, to thank God for being born in Old England, ought to be made a negur slave of." Then turning to Richard, he added, "Lad, ye wor born a freeman : ye be a poor boy ; but not a lord in the land can stamp his fine boot on the toe of your old shoe but ye may take the law on him. Think o' that, Dick ! Liberty and old England for ever !"

The scene had been talked over at night in their own dear cottage ; and Mrs. Barker, with that legal knowledge which it besecmed a beadle's wife to possess, had expounded to them the law of their native land exemplifying it by a recital of cases occurring within her own recollection, where for instances of supposed aggression even ludicrously trivial, certain litigious cottagers had summoned their richer neighbours before a magistrate ; ay, and obtained redress too.

All these things had tended to deepen in the mind of our widow the feeling of independence natural to it : she regarded the legal enactments of her country as being to every poor man "his own vine and his own fig-tree," under whose shadow he might securely sit ; and now, despite of all present experience, she was confident that redress was to be had, though where she could not tell. There was no outrage yet committed—so far as she knew—to warrant an appeal to magisterial authority ; but surely there must be some species of protection short of that. The remarks of South flashed upon her memory, and she dreaded to find his description just, to the letter : but still, she thought, "we are in England ; and it is not possible that in this English town there should

be some thousands of slaves—white slaves—free-born slaves—and my own children among them. No: it is not possible.”—and she quickened her pace, as if to escape from the tormenting suggestion that it was not only possible but absolutely true.

When in the evening, the party once more assembled, her attention was partially diverted by seeing Mary pull in with her a singular-looking child, from whose thick, tangled ringlets of dark auburn peeped out a little face, full of expression, and of a complexion the clear beauty of which was not wholly obscured by all the soil that had accumulated upon it. Her bright hazel eyes danced with evident pleasure, and the pretty mouth was dimpled with smiles as it uttered half-coaxingly, half-reproachfully, “Ah, then, Miss Mary, ma’am, that I wouldn’t be let clean myself for the gentry to see me!”

“It will make you more careful to clean yourself, Katy, if I let them see how dirty you are: come along, granny won’t be cross to you.”

The little girl advanced, and stood smiling and blushing before the widow, who, kindly patting her cheek, said, “So, you are Mary’s little friend, Katy Malony.”

“I’m Miss Mary’s scavenger, ma’am.”

“And Mary is your piecener,” added Helen, who saw the old lady look grave at this distinction of ranks.

“Yes, I’m Miss Katy’s piecener, ma’am,” said Mary in high good humour, imitating Katy’s accent as she stood beside her. The little girl looked round, and laughed. After a few more remarks, Mary drew her grandmother aside, and with a face full of earnest anxiety said, “Oh, granny, that poor child’s father is so weak, and so friendless, and treated so unkindly by the people where they lodge! I want you to get him in here, and talk to him; for oh, you can’t think how shockingly ignorant he is! You won’t believe it, but I found out that he says his prayers to the Virgin Mary—only think! to the Virgin Mary, who died one thousand seven hundred and odd years ago: and he splashes a little pump-water about every night; for what, can you ever guess? No, that you never could—he does it to frighten the devil, granny! Did you ever in all your whole life hear of any thing like that granny?”

The widow had heard of it before; but she only replied, “Well, my darling, blessed be God for the Bible, which teaches us to avoid all such foolish and wicked ways.”

“That is just the thing, granny: I’m quite sure Katy’s father knows no more about the gospel than any heathen at the world’s farthest end. I want you to teach him.”

“If you bring him here, we will do what the Lord enables us.”

“Thank you, thank you, my own granny! I brought Katy that she may see how kind you are, and that we are not the grand gentry she takes us for. She will soon bring her father, if you encourage her a little.”

So Katy was encouraged to her heart’s content; and having had her “tay,” as she called it, took leave with a joyous promise that she would ask her father to come next evening. This little incident gave a pleasant turn to their feelings. Mary was eloquent on the subject of Malony’s unaccountable religion; and the widow gave them some insight into its soul-destroying character, from the pages of inspired truth. All the missionary zeal with which Mr. Barlow had loved to inspire his little flock, on behalf of the heathen, was now kindled afresh, its object being a poor Irish papist, who was listening the while to his child’s enraptured description of her new friends, and giving her the promises he sought of accompanying her to their dwelling. But when the hour of rest arrived, the widow could not help noticing the evident difficulty and pain attending the movement of Helen’s arm. She questioned her, and was told that the fatigue was certainly great, and that any amelioration of her mental and bodily sufferings would be welcome. Beyond this, she owned nothing; but her frequent starts and restlessness during the night increased her friend’s uneasiness to such a pitch that she resolved on making another attempt to discover where redress for factory-wrongs was to be sought: and to this end she made up her mind that a visit to the clergyman whose ministry she attended would be the safest step. He was certainly a good man: he preached the truth, and bore a high character for humanity and every other right quality. He must needs know the mill-system, for

he had been several years rector of that parish; and he would surely point out to her the best path to take. Once decided upon, this plan left her nothing to regret but that she had not adopted it in the first instance. So, next morning, with as little delay as possible, after setting her simple household in order, she tied on her black silk bonnet and Sunday cloak, and announced herself at the Rector's door as one of his parishioners, seeking counsel from him. The servant soon returned, bidding her sit down in a small parlour for a few minutes: and there the widow cheerfully awaited the coming of one who would as she fondly believed put her in possession of that rare philosopher's stone—justice in the factories.

CHAPTER XII.

FAILING HOPES.

THE Rector was a man of grave, quiet aspect, more stately and reserved than Mr. Barlow, but perfectly kind both in language and manner. He listened not only with attention but with evident interest to the tale; and the significant shake of the head that marked his emphatic dissent from her conduct in yielding to Mr. Stratton's persuasion boded little good. This gesture was frequently repeated as she went on; but her heart never quaked so much as when it was used as a comment on her declaration, that certainly there must be a remedy somewhere, though she had not yet been able to discover where.

"I now feel, sir, that I have done wrong, very wrong, in catching at a seeming advantage without sufficient thought and prayer; but I erred through anxiety for the welfare of those dearer to me than myself."

"I make no doubt of it, Mrs. Green; but when unhappily we neglect the command to be wise as serpents, the harmlessness of the dove will not save us from the consequences of that omission."

"In all my ways, sir, I strove to acknowledge God; and I trusted that he would direct my path."

"True; but there is a little word of

mighty meaning, which is much insisted on in scripture: 'Wait.' You seem to me to have overlooked that word."

"I acknowledge my fault, sir; I own my hastiness; I take all shame to myself; and believe me, my sufferings have not been small. But now I come to ask counsel, while humbly receiving your just rebuke. Submit I must to very many privations: my future days must be passed in sorrow and anxiety; and I never can expect again to know the comfort I once enjoyed. But though we must all toil painfully and all suffer in various ways, I want my children protected from vice on the one hand, and from oppression on the other. This is what every body in a Christian, free country has a right to expect; and it is all I may now presume to crave."

The rector again shook his head; "I can only direct you to seek help of God."

"But he works by means, sir; and I am bound to use the means."

"Your case, I lament to say, is that of many others, who on first coming to the mills are shocked at the demoralization prevailing; and not being aware that the evil has outgrown all ordinary means of checking it, persuade themselves that redress may be obtained, until experience shows them that nothing remains but to submit to their painful lot."

"Yes, sir," said the widow, with some warmth, for she thought the rector treated the matter much too phlegmatically, "yes, sir, another thing remains; and that is to quit these wicked mills altogether."

"Of course if you have any other means of subsistence for your family; but from what you have told me, I should fear you had not: and let me, as a friend, dissuade you from another precipitate movement."

Mrs. Green was greatly distressed; she began to feel the pressure of the bonds that surrounded her on all sides, and with tears in her eyes exclaimed, "And will not you, sir, for the love of Him whose minister you are, assist me?"

"Believe me," answered the rector kindly, "had I, instead of a limited parochial income, twice the revenues of this diocese at my disposal, they would not suffice to answer even a small part of the heart-rending appeals daily made to my charity."

"I believe it, sir, from what I have seen: but it is not money I want."

"What then do you require of me?"

"To help me to remove my poor children into some situation where they may earn their bread, honestly and safely."

"It is impossible, unless you have friends in the place to give you a very special recommendation among the upper classes; and even then I fear the competition is too great to afford you a reasonable hope of succeeding. As a country girl, well brought up, and of unquestionable character, Helen *might* have procured a proper service in some family here; but even so short a time in a mill (to say nothing of the aspersions so cruelly cast on her) would be an insuperable objection. For myself, I would readily offer to assist you in this way, but the little interest of that sort which I may possess, is like my purse, taxed to the uttermost: and at this moment I have the parents of several excellent girls, educated in my own schools, anxiously looking to me to avert the necessity of sending them to the mills, by finding domestic situations among my friends."

The widow sighed deeply; then, after a pause, resumed, "Are you not able, sir, at all to influence the owners and managers of these factories?"

"Not unless they have been so brought under a higher influence as to esteem the minister for his Master's sake; and this, I am sorry to say, is not the case within the sphere of my labours. In fact, your employers with their families are church-going people, and pay all outward respect to the ordinances of religion; but would no more think of allowing any interference on the clergyman's part with their worldly concerns, than they would of intermeddling with him in the composition of a sermon."

"Am I then to look on the case as hopeless?"

"I wish I could point out any cheering prospect to you; but I fear you must now abide the consequences of a hasty step; and patiently await the answer to prayer from Him who, though for the present he afflicts, will yet show mercy. All these things, howsoever painful they may be, are working together for good to you, if you love God."

The widow humbly assented; and feeling that there was no pretence for a prolonged visit, took her leave.

This interview was, in its effects, by far the most depressing of all she had recently tried. It seemed as though every door of escape was rapidly closing round her; and at the same time her spirit was chilled to an unwonted degree. She could not deny that the rector had been perfectly kind; that he had listened willingly, answered to the point, and advised her judiciously, besides bringing some scriptural encouragements to her mind; but she missed the earnest zeal in her interests, the cordial sympathy in her griefs, the oil and wine of divine consolation poured into every wound by her Village Pastor. She missed the closing prayer, the fervent parting benediction, all of which her fancy had in prospect mixed up with this visit. Reason told her that it was impossible for a stranger to enter so fully into the case as one whom she had known for years; and that the rector was so beset by applicants, so accustomed to the tale of wrong and sorrow, as to render it surprising that he should have bestowed so much attention on her: yet she felt it, and perhaps not the less keenly because he had so honestly shown her the root of present suffering in her injudicious conduct. We are far more willing to condemn ourselves than to hear from others the same truthful sentence.

Meanwhile, the object of all her efforts seemed to recede more remotely from view as she strove to approach it. The very simplicity of the case added to her perplexity. She had hired out her children to devote a stipulated portion of their time to daily labour, in an establishment owned, and, as she supposed, conducted by English gentlemen. She had witnessed many of the various kinds of service in which the poorer classes of the land engage; and she knew that in any case of dissatisfaction on either side, the aggrieved party could at least state his grievance in a competent quarter; but here she found herself completely baffled, repelled on all sides, she scarcely knew how; but made conscious that no one admitted his own responsibility, or seemed aware of being under any obligation to judge the cause of the poor who laboured for him. It then occurred to her that a system of inspection

had been established, and that the gentleman appointed to execute this duty must be the individual to redress what was wrong. It appeared strange that the rector should have failed to point out so obvious a resource; and she determined to ascertain some particulars. South, whom she knew to be just then out of work, seemed a likely person to give her information on this point; and making due allowance for the dark colouring that his grumbling propensities would throw over every subject, she thought a statement of bare facts from him might be valuable. To his house therefore she repaired—a dark, dreary miserable-looking abode—where she found him engaged in reading a dirty newspaper. After a few mutual enquiries, and civil speeches, she put the query to him, without mentioning the circumstances that led to it.

"Inspectors!" exclaimed South, with a smile of derision, "yes, I can tell you enough about the inspectors; and that without going beyond what concerns our own families. When the new plan first came out, we poor people thought we had got a great boon, and should have every thing put to rights; but of all the tricks ever played us, I think that is the most bare-faced. Now, Mrs. Green, please to listen."

"I shall be sure to do that, neighbour."

"Ay, I dare say you've begun to find out the want of something in the shape of justice; but you may look long enough before you find it. This district where we live is under the inspection of a gentleman appointed by government, and it is his duty to look after every mill within it. Now, how big do you think this district is?"

"Indeed, I can't say; perhaps this town and another as large."

"You know the map of England?"

"Yes, pretty well: the children learnt it at home."

"Well, ma'am, our inspector's district includes the county of Lancaster, the county of Northumberland, the county of Cumberland, of Westmorland, of Durham, and two ridings of the pretty little county of York."

"Impossible!"

"It is true: and the number of mills that he has to superintend is about eighteen hundred. Now there are little more

than three hundred days to a year, leaving out Sundays and holidays; the inspector's district lies spread over many hundred miles of country; the mills are greatly scattered, many being in villages, and on little streams in remote places; and so you may judge what time the gentleman has to look after every one of them."

"But surely he has a great many agents?"

"He has four."

"Four!"

"Four sub-inspectors, called superintendents, who, by flying about, contrive as they say, that one of them should visit each place three times a year, to see how things are going on, to report to the inspector-general, and so forth."

"But that is too seldom to be of any real use; if the person only comes three times in a year, all sort of wrong can go on for nearly four months without a check, and then the complaints will be so many and of such long standing, that he must be quite overwhelmed, and puzzled among them."

South laughed: "The superintendent has not even power to enter a mill, but with the full consent of the owners; if he hears of any bad doings, he cannot insist on investigating the matter; he can only send a report to his chief, and it is he who must enquire and punish."

"What, the gentleman with the eighteen hundred mills! It would take him a year's time to judge upon half the cases brought before him, that had accumulated since his last visit in one large factory town, I should think."

"Mrs. Green," said South, "the inspector has no power to interfere in any case whatever, if the matter complained of did not occur within **FOURTEEN DAYS** of the time when the superintendent discovers and reports it."*

The widow stared at her informant, doubting whether she heard aright.

"So much for the law, Mrs. Green; and now for the facts to show you how it works. I had a girl of sixteen, brought up in the country, a stout, fine girl, who looked almost eighteen; well, she engaged

* "If every section of the law had been violated on the 17th of January, and I go to the mill on the 1st of February, I cannot touch him."—Vide Evidence of Leonard Horner Esq., Inspector, given on oath before the Committee of the House of Commons, March 11, 1846.

herself in a mill where they worked all night; and you know people over eighteen may work as much as they please—there is no law for them. My poor girl got covetous of the wages, and represented herself to be more than eighteen, and so obtained regular night-work. Every body saw it would kill the child; but she had a taste for dress, and nothing could hinder her, because whatever she got besides the regular day-wages was her own, of course. Well; somebody mentioned to the superintendent that she was under age; and when the chief man came, he asked her. She said she was near nineteen; and being, as I told you, a fine grown girl, much stouter than most of the factory girls are at twenty, he did not doubt her word. She was left to please herself, and so she did; and in a year from that time we buried her.”

“But you could surely have interposed your authority as a father,” observed the widow, who saw more to blame in the narrator than in any other person concerned.

“That’s easier said than done,” replied South with a shrug. “Disobedience to parents is one of the first lessons learned in the mills; and besides, my good neighbour, when you have seen one of the flying visits of our inspectors, and how nicely the owners keep them tethered where there is anything wrong to be found out, you will understand matters better than you can do from any description of mine.”

The widow could not gainsay this; but she felt deeply for the poor young suicide. Here was first a lure spread before her by the mill-owner in the shape of additional wages, for which to barter her very life; then most culpable encouragement given by the act of the parents in allowing her to appropriate the extra earnings, while they pocketed the fruit of her day-labour—actual encouragement that rendered void whatever they might say against the proceeding. Again, there was an evident dereliction of duty on the part of any man who, being employed to correct abuses of this sort, could content himself with the denial of the party most interested in practising a deception, and leave the poor young girl to her fate. “God be praised,” she mentally ejaculated, “that all this

world’s wealth would not tempt my Helen to a lie!”

South, meanwhile, looked vexed and disconcerted; he saw that his own unnatural conduct had struck his auditor, and he began, as usual, to lament the hardening effect that the system produced on all connected with it; then proceeded—“Bad as it is to let young people go on all night, if they will just say they are eighteen, and don’t look much less, the other two things that our inspectors ought to remedy are worse:—working young children over-hours, and ill-treating the poor little labourers. Two of your own grandchildren lie beside my girl in the churchyard from the first; and Sarah is following them as fast as she can, through the last of these two evils.”

This was bringing the matter home to the widow’s present anxieties: she asked what difficulty there could be in obtaining redress under circumstances so glaring, and so easily proved.

“In the first place,” replied South, “you must remember that twelve hours a-day is the time limited for those under eighteen years of age; with the hours afforded for meals and schooling, your children going I think, at half-past five in the morning, finish their day in the mill at seven?”

“Yes; they come home very punctually.”

“And you think if they were worked an hour longer than the law allows, you could prove it, and call the owners to account?”

“There could be no want of proofs, when so many must know of the circumstance.”

“No: besides which, the owner who worked his mill beyond the proper hours would obtain an advantage over his more honest neighbours, and so make it their interest to watch and report him. The gentlemen in Parliament who think we have already got all we ought to have, lay a great stress on this; and also say that the lights in the mill, after the regular time, would alone be sufficient to draw attention. For all that, Wright’s children died of overwork, being in a mill where they managed to cheat alike the laws, the inspector, and the labourers. First, the time-books were kept so unfairly that they made it look just as they chose; and you

may be sure neither superintendent nor inspector had leisure enough to search out the roguery; particularly as they took good care to go on correctly for a couple of weeks before the visit; and whatever had happened beyond that time was out of the reach of punishment. Next, they cheated the children out of their proper hours for meals and schooling by altering the clock, and other contrivances; and if they wanted to keep all hands at work half-an-hour, or longer, after regular closing hour, they would loosen a pin or a strap in the morning, stop the machinery for a few minutes to set it right, and then, under shelter of the very act they were breaking, detain them at night to work up lost time."

"But all this might have been told to the superintendent, or inspector, and punished."

"If it happened within fourteen days; and if any of the labourers thought it worth their while to be turned out of work for complaining, or ill treated in the mill ever after: but this did not happen; and the children fell off into galloping consumptions as fast as they could go. The Wrights are a sickly family, and their children could not stand it long."

"Was Sarah in that mill?"

"No, she was with your friends the Messrs. Z. who pride themselves on being great time-keepers, and never fail to inform against offending neighbours. If an unusual demand comes, they have other means of meeting the emergency without working over-hours."

"But this watching of one another must certainly be a great hindrance to deceit about time."

"If children alone are employed, it is; but when the mill is kept going for those who have no protection from the laws, because they are, or say they are, eighteen, many a half hour is stolen, early and late, without discovery, from the poor little ones. Your young people are still fresh in the work, and have a hearty good-will to it; but wait awhile, and you'll see them come home so fagged and worn out, that half-an-hour will seem more to them, whether for labour or for rest, than half a day used to do. However, I was going to speak of poor Sarah: she was always simple and weak-minded, and all manner of advan-

tages were taken of it, not so much by the children as the overlooker, who happened to be a great rascal; and having some spite against the innocent creature, was always for revenging every body's faults on her. He would give her orders that she had not the wit to understand properly and then knock her about for the mistakes that could not but follow. You know sometimes one has a dislike to some particular individual, even without any real cause: that is the case often in the mills, among the upper work-people, who are wearied and plagued enough, and glad to vent their ill-humour where they can do it safely. Woe to the factory child that is in the bad graces of a cross-tempered spinner or overlooker! Sarah, then quite a little one, got a blow from this fellow, which hurt her so much that he was summoned for it, and fined; this made him more bitter, though at the same time more cautious how he showed it. I don't suppose it is true, though many say so, that she was sent or pushed into a dangerous part of the machinery on purpose to cripple her; but I do believe that man has to answer to God for all her sufferings. You see she was worked till her ancles bent under her; and if Mrs. Wright was not your daughter, I would say it was an infamous shame to let the child continue going after she got so weak and ill. However, the machinery settled the matter by pulling off her arm."

The widow Green felt the blood curdling in her veins as he proceeded. South saw how deadly pale she was becoming, and resumed, "You need not fear for your own; that brute is no longer in the mill. He was a great favourite with the Messrs. Z., and they promoted him to be a sort of agent; and now I understand he is made a gentleman of, and goes about the country with fine stories, to lure poor people from remote villages into their mills. He is a plausible, smooth-spoken fellow, and does a deal in that way, though his face alone would hang him, without taking into account the cut over his eye, that he got from an adult workman who caught him cruelly beating his little girl. The child soon died, and the man was kept in prison, punished, and turned adrift to starve; but though Master Ferris came off with flying colours, he must carry that scar for a re-

membrance to the grave. But come, Mrs. Green, we'll say no more about it, for you are really getting quite ill."

This was true; and no wonder. The description of the man had startled her; but the name placed it beyond a doubt. Mr. Stratton had addressed his friend as "Ferris," and that name was also written in pencil in the fly-leaf of the fatal pamphlet. She had then been beguiled from her home, and induced to bring her William's children, and poor Helen, into the very same mill, by the identical ruffian who had, in effect, murdered the gentle, harmless Sarah, and whose name was associated with so many dreadful cruelties. In itself, this was nothing wonderful: the poor-law and the factory system had merely played into each other's hands, as they usually do; and her district being fruitful in labourers, and not very lately canvassed, it is quite natural that the travelling agent should have taken it on his route. Still the coincidence was a shock to her feelings not easily overcome; and she longed to seek in her poor home the solace that she always found in her bible and prayer.

South was half grieved to have occasioned so much distress, which he attributed to fear alone; and by way of reparation said, "Come, take heart, neighbour, it cannot be more than a month or so before the superintendent comes round again, and I will promise you notice, in spite of all the care taken to prevent it, and tell you best how to get at him with any complaint you may have. Meanwhile remember there is nobody in the mill so bad as Ferris now; and I dare say your children will do well enough.

The widow thanked him, and departed.

Returning home, with the load of anxious distress and self-condemnation grievously increased, she found her place neat and orderly even beyond what it always was, and James in his best clothes, looking well-pleased at his performances in the clearing and cleaning way. "I thought granny," said he, "that as we are going to have company you would wish things to look nice."

"What company, my dear?"

"Mr. Malony, and Katy."

"I had forgotten: but James, Malony is such a very poor man that we will not

make the most of ourselves before him: it would perhaps discourage rather than please him. I will go, before I take off my bonnet, and get a bit of some thing substantial to nourish them; for Mary says, you know, they have little to eat."

With this kind purpose she went out again, and on her return found James in his working dress, still neat and clean; and some little matters that he thought more ornamental than necessary put out of sight: she also noticed two bibles placed within reach. "Oh my smitten one," thought the widow, as she fondly kissed his pale cheek, "how merciful is the affliction that keeps thee alike from the snares of the wicked and the rod of the cruel!"

"Granny," said the boy smiling, and pointing to the books, "You find I am still determined poor Malony *should* see the best we have; and we must make the most of ourselves too, by trying to show him how much happier we are than he can be with such a silly, wicked thing, by way of a religion, as he has got."

The party from the mill had not long been seated when a tap at the door was followed by its opening before any one could answer; and the salutation, "God save all here," announced the guests. The figure that entered first was that of a tall bony man, whose dress it would be difficult to describe, its principal distinction being the absence of patches, and an abundant call for them. Indeed his ragged appearance cast a slur even on poor Katy in the estimation of James, who was sure that Mary would have sat up all night at the needle, after a day in the mills, rather than see any of them in so dilapidated a condition. Uncombed hair, and beard of some days' growth on a face not over clean, were also a great disadvantage to their proprietor; but in spite of all, there was a look of intelligence, good humour, and unrestraint, with a native courtesy and frankness, that produced an involuntary liking for the poor Irishman.

"You are kindly welcome, Mr. Malony," said the widow, as she pointed to a chair.

"Thank ye, my lady: the never a one of me would have intruded upon yees, but for the child."

Katy, clean as soap and water could make her and glowing with delight, looked

archly up in his face, as she leaned on his knee, saying, "Didn't I tell you it was kindly welcome we'd be; and didn't the lady say that same herself, now?"

"My dear child," observed the widow, "there are no ladies or gentlemen here. We are poor people all, and so we must regard each other. Happy are we, if we be among the poor of this world, rich in faith, whom God has chosen to be heirs of his kingdom!"

"By my life," ejaculated Malony, "but that's a fine saying—Glory be to God!"

"What an odd way of talking," whispered James to Mary.

"Oh, let him alone: granny will soon bring him to leave off swearing."

But the new discoveries, consequent upon this meeting, must be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

AMPLE justice was done to the widow's provisions by Malony, whose craving appetite—one of the concomitants of his distressing malady—rarely found such abundance, accompanied with such kind persuasions to make himself at home. When the meal was over, he drew from his waistcoat-pocket what he called his "bit of a dudeen," a very short pipe, and adding another pinch to the contents of its bowl, he helped himself to a cinder from the little grate, and presently enveloped the party in the smoke of his favourite weed. The young people looked on in some consternation; their grandmother not only disapproved the habit, but also greatly disliked the smell and other effects resulting from it; and Mary was about to remonstrate, when the widow by a sign prevented her. The exquisite happiness that beamed from the really beautiful face of poor little Katy, as she watched her father's returning smiles induced her to extend even this unusual indulgence; and Malony's felicity was complete.

"By my soul now," said he, as gradually raising his drooping form he leaned back on his chair, "but this is the hospi-

ality of ould Ireland itself, come across over the salt say. Sorra such a welcome have I met here, to put the warmth in me cold bones, barrin among my own poor people in it, that has the will but not the power. Long life to you, ma'am!" and he held out his hand and gave the widow's a hearty shake.

"To the Giver of all good we must render our thanks," she replied, "for any comforts that he enables us to refresh one another with in the way of our pilgrimage."

"True for you, ma'am dear; but it's many years since I went on pilgrimage, and little comfort I found by the way."

"Father's been to Lough Derg, and brought home a blessed crucifix," whispered Katy to Mary, who replied aloud, "And what is Lough Derg?"

"'Tis the holiest place in all Ireland, my dear," said Malony. "I went and performed my stations there—didn't miss one."

"And what did you get?"

"The pardon of all my sins, jewel."

"And how did you know they were pardoned?"

"How did I know, is it? Sure had not I it under his reverence's own hand? and I came away with my soul as clean as the smooth of your cheek—by my life I did."

"My good friend," said the widow mildly, "don't be offended if I remind you that our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us not to swear at all."

Malony bent his head very low when the Saviour was named, but looked surprised; and James quickly followed it up by reading from the fifth chapter of St. Matthew the words of our Lord, and then from the epistle of St. James, that apostle's warning on the same subject. This led to an animated conversation, in the course of which they discovered that so far from Malony taking the bible for his guide, the poor fellow had never heard of such a book: that he was wholly ignorant of every thing relating to the Lord Jesus, excepting the fact of his crucifixion, in reference to which he drew from his bosom a very rude carving in wood, more like a South Sea idol than any thing else, in honouring which he evidently considered that he worshipped God; and in bearing

it about his person, that he enjoyed the divine presence and protection. It is impossible to describe the astonishment of the children, the emotion of Helen, or the anxious distress of the widow, as this false hope of the dying man gradually became apparent to them. Katy's sparkling eyes were turned eagerly from one countenance to another, as, clinging closer to her poor father, she seemed almost to resent the evident discredit put upon the objects of his faith; while the gentle, affectionate, and even respectful language in which they all addressed him, won her heart in spite of its evident purport. It was plainly James's Bible against Malony's crucifix; and nothing could be more touching than to see the bright gaze of these two—the man and the boy—both far advanced in consumption, fixed, now on each other, now on the respective objects of their earnest but friendly debate. James had truth on his side; he argued plainly, and brought a passage from scripture to confirm every sentiment he uttered: Malony abounded in clever remarks, ready evasions, and a confidence in the power of his church and of his wooden talisman, as unlimited as was that of James in the infallibility of the oracles of God. Every word spoken by the boy was precious to the soul of his grandmother and Helen, for it showed how very deeply he had drank at the fountain of saving knowledge; and this was rendered more conspicuous by the childish simplicity of language in which he clothed the most weighty arguments, and uttered the strongest assertions that triumphant faith could dictate. On the other hand they were surprised at the natural ability and shrewd good sense which lay obscured beneath the rags, the poverty, the ignorance and uncouth phrase of the poor Irishman, who finished the controversy by saying, "It's a credit you are to them that reared you, ma bouchal; and you've more good words on your side than poor Pat Malony, and he speaking a foreign tongue. Fait, and if 'twas Irish ye spake we'd be more even."

"What! do you speak Irish?"

"Musha, what else would I spake, and I an Irishman all out?" He uttered this in a sharper tone than he had before used, and stroking Katy's head, addressed her

fondly in a tongue wholly new and unintelligible to his English friends. Katy responded in the same language, with some earnestness, and her father turning to the widow, said, "Sure, ma'am, my child loves your little girl with all the veins of her heart; and why should'nt she, being that she's the first friend my Katy ever had in them mills."

This mention of the mills brought back to Mrs. Green's recollection the painful circumstances that she had well nigh forgotten in the deep interest of the sacred subject they had been discussing. She asked Malony whether he had himself been employed in the factories; and learned that he had filled a most laborious office in the engine department, until his health wholly gave way. It had been declining for some time, even before he left Ireland, and of course the change was not likely to prove beneficial to it; but the truth, he said, was, that his wife's death had broken his heart, and the restlessness that came over him made every place disagreeable. He wandered about with his motherless child, till at M. he found an opening for giving her some employment, and getting the same himself. "But now," he concluded, "I'd be going back to my own poor country, to lay my bones under the green grass, and to leave my Katy among them that would give her the biggest half of their last pratee for the love of God and the holy Virgin—let alone the regard they had for her mother and me. It can't be, though: they've got us in a net, and in it we must abide, God help us!"

"What net?" asked Mary.

"Fait, dear, it isn't for simple people like us to deal with them that are above us. I just put Katy into the mill, thinking that I might take her out again on a decent notice; but when I comes to the chap—the agent they call him—what does he but tell me I put her in by the year; and because I didn't take her out at the end of it, here's eleven months of a new one to come, before I can remove her. Eleven months," he deliberately repeated, opening the collar of his tattered shirt, and showing the skeleton of a neck, "with not as much flesh on these bones as will stand the wear of three."

"Be asy, father dear," said the little

girl in a soothing tone; "your cough is much better, and please God you'll get well and carry me home yet."

"No, Katy, agra: 'tis among the strangers I'll lie, and the comfort I'll carry to my grave is that I won't see you suffer, when you're without a friend in this wide world."

Katy involuntarily threw a tearful glance around her, and the appeal was quickly answered, for each had something to say in the way of assurance that she should not be forsaken; and though, in the warmth of their feeling, all spoke together, Malony seemed to hear every word, and to feast on it. "And you won't let her perish," he said, "and she a poor orphan?"

"I am a poor orphan," remarked Helen; "I lost my parents long before I was as old as Katy, and I had no claim on this dear family: yet you see how God has put it into their hearts to be to me all that I lost."

Malony looked earnestly at her. "Blessings on your sweet face," he exclaimed, "and bad luck to the brute that could strike you!"

This might have passed for a mere deprecatory wish, had not Helen's colour mounted to crimson, while Mary's angry glance, and Katy's eager "Hush! father," invested it with a different character. Even James was thrown off his guard by the shock, and his meek countenance kindled with wrathful fire as he repeated, "Strike! you don't mean to say that any body has *dared* to strike our Helen!"

Malony looked sadly confused; he saw his error, but how to retract he knew not. The widow seemed perfectly stunned, gazing at Helen, who at length rose, and throwing herself into her arms, said, "Dearest granny, don't be distressed: it was a trifle, and I hardly feel it now at all. Such things cannot sometimes be helped in a place like the mills. Be satisfied that I did not intentionally deserve a blow; and that by the grace of God I was enabled to take it patiently, and to forgive. So now, granny, let us forget it too; for you know the command is, 'Forgive as ye would be forgiven;' and the way we wish to be forgiven is that our iniquities may be remembered no more—cast into the depths of the sea. Into the depths of the sea then let

us cast this little wrong, and never more speak or think about it."

She said this with such affectionate earnestness, with a brow so unruffled, and a smile so meek, that Malony gazed on her as though she had been a vision. "By my life!" he abruptly and fiercely exclaimed, "The villain that could hurt you ought to have his arm chopped off at the shoulder."

The widow's struggle was over; the immediate importance of such a practical lesson of Christianity as Helen was giving forced itself on her mind; and after fondly embracing the poor girl, she turned to her indignant guest, saying, "Dear neighbour we have been a loving and a peaceable family; and anything like severe usage is quite new to my children. Helen, besides, is of an age, when such violence is no less an insult than a wrong; therefore you cannot wonder that it startled us at first. But we call ourselves the followers of Jesus Christ, and He has said that those who will indeed follow him must take up the cross. Not that cross," she added, as Malony half drew the little crucifix forth, "but the cross that our Lord bore when he was despised and afflicted, persecuted and forsaken for our sakes, long before they put him to death. Now you may carry that cross, and wear it about your neck, at the very time you are chopping off, as you say, a man's arm at the shoulder, in revenge for a blow: but we carry the cross by suffering willingly what our dear Master suffered before us, and doing to our enemies what He did to his, when they were nailing him to the tree on which he hung for hours in all the agony of a dreadful death."

"What did he do to them?" asked Malony.

"You shall hear both what they did to him and what he did to them," replied James, who had been soothed by a long and earnest whisper from Helen: he took his Bible, and read in a tremulous voice the narrative of our Redeemer's sufferings, as given by St. Luke. When he came to the words, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do," he made a full stop, and looked earnestly at Malony.

"And was that all?" said the Irishman.

"That was all the revenge he took on

those who tortured and murdered him; but you shall hear what he did to a wicked thief who was put to death at the same time—he proceeded and finished the chapter.

“And now,” said the widow, who saw the intense interest excited in the mind of her poor guest by this sacred history, “now let us speak a few words to Him who said and did all this for our salvation.” They kneeled down immediately; and in most touching language she breathed forth a prayer, suited to the circumstances of all present, especially to those of Helen, Malony and his child. All were in tears save Willy, who had fallen asleep with his head on the chair, and Katy, who was repeating with all her might, and in an audible whisper, *paters, aves* and creeds; evidently supposing it was the same thing. Not so Malony; he gave his whole attention to what was uttered; and the frequent transit of his coat-sleeve across his eyes proved how much he entered into the meaning of the petitions. When they rose, Mary exclaimed, “Now let us sing;” and Willy being roused with a gentle rebuke—for the poor child was worn out with fatigue—they all struck up a hymn of praise and gladness to a very cheerful tune, which threw Katy into an ecstasy of delight, and brightened her father’s face with smiles.

“God be with ye!” uttered the poor man, as he prepared to go. “It’s you that have lightened Pat Malony’s heart of the biggest sorrow within it this blessed night; and I’ve put trouble into yours, but I didn’t mean it, any how.”

“No, you have not,” replied the widow. “We hope to be able all of us to say with David, ‘It is good for me to have been afflicted.’”

“Who is David, ma’am?”

“There’s a deal about him in my book, Mr. Malony,” answered James. “Come again soon, and I’ll read to you about him.”

“Long life to you, avourneen! ’Tisn’t a long life may be you’ll have; but ’tis a happy one.”

“My book makes it so,” said James: “at least it teaches me how to be happy.”

A cordial good-night now passed; and the family were left alone.

“Don’t be angry, Helen,” said James, “but I do want to know why you were struck.”

Mary undertook to answer the question, and said that Helen had been complaining to her of headache and languor during their walk to the mill, owning that she felt scarcely equal to the day’s work. When there, she had exerted herself greatly; but on being assailed by some rude taunts and ruder insinuations on the part of Phœbe and her abettors, who attributed her evident illness to having drunk too much on the preceding night, she had, for the first time, burst into a fit of hysterical crying. This moved some who had never been touched by her patient endurance, and led to a violent quarrel between Phœbe and a lad occasionally employed in that room. The foulest language was given and retorted; and an overlooker passing just then was attracted by the noise they made. He demanded the cause of the riot: Helen was pointed out, and he commanded her instantly to rise from the bench where she had sank, and to resume her employment. This she was unable to do, from the increased agitation that the uproar had thrown her into; and without waiting any farther explanation, the man had struck her severely across the arm and shoulder with one of the rods of the machinery which he had in his hand.

“It was not a very hard blow,” said Helen in a deprecating tone; “and when the people about me saw me struck, some of them interposed, and told the overlooker I was not to blame. A girl fetched me some water to drink, and I was soon able to go back to my employment. I was more sorry to have given way so, than for the pain of the blow; but indeed I had been feverish all night, and the noise and whirling of the machinery almost took away my senses. So now, James, you have heard all; and pray do let it drop.”

The request was complied with; but every bosom swelled with indignation hard to be repressed even by the pleadings of Christian forgiveness: all felt it would have been far easier to overlook such an outrage against their own persons than against their gentle Helen. The widow was thankful that Malony had blundered out what was to have been

kept a profound secret from her, though it added tenfold poignancy to another secret, confined in her own bosom—her total failure in seeking redress from the owners, and the consciousness that even in a case of violence like this she should fare no better. She had built too much on the supposed advantage of Mr. Stratton's introduction and countenance; she was now painfully undeceived, and obliged to admit the conviction that he was a stranger to the individuals with whose unprincipled tool, Ferris, he had co-operated, for the good of the parish, in sending her to the factories. Her position, therefore, was in no respect better than that of any other friendless poor woman in M., excepting the respectability of appearance and character which she still hoped to maintain, and the far richer distinction of having a sure, though unseen refuge in the day of calamity.

Helen's arm, which she examined when they were alone, was much swollen and discoloured; and the girl was glad to have the stiffened shoulder-joint relieved by bathing with a lotion: had it been the right arm, she confessed, it would have been impossible to conceal it, so painful was every movement. Seeing the tears escaping from the eyes of her best friend, as she tenderly laved the place, Helen entered on the subject of poor Malony's unaccountable religion, which seemed to her to set common sense utterly at defiance, and then spoke with glowing delight of the part little James had taken. "Did you observe, granny, how he put down every thing the other said, by setting forth the Saviour only? I thought it very beautiful. Indeed it is plain to me that Popery and Jesus Christ are two things like darkness and light—a person may have either, but he cannot have both."

"Very true, Helen; and the way to drive darkness out is to let the light in."

"Yes, that was what dear James was trying to do all the while; and it seemed to me as if a little glimmer did now and then fall upon poor Malony. Oh, granny! what ways Satan has of blinding people!"

Thus did the girl beguile the attention of her friend from her own sufferings; and then declaring that the operation had made her arm "delightfully comfortable," she went smilingly to rest.

The next few days passed on as usual, Malony dropping in occasionally for half-an-hour to see James, who never failed to interest him with some portion of scripture: till the widow, struck by the increasing attention paid by the poor man, and conscious that he must ere long be disabled from walking so far, resolved that he should, by some means, have at least a new Testament for himself. She enquired whether he would not like Katy to read such a book to him in the evenings and on Sundays.

"Troth, and I would; but Katy can't read."

"Not read! She has been to school every day for two hours since she entered the mill, for that at least the law compels them to allow! and how is it that she cannot yet read?"

"Sure, I'll ask her that same," replied Malony, who seemed never before to have thought on the subject. The widow mentioned it to Mary, who said Katy certainly went to school, but not to the same that she attended. Enquiry being made of Katy, she stated that during school-hours she went to a place where as many children as could stand in it were crowded in a small room; the mistress was an old woman who kept some of the better dressed near her, and they seemed to be spelling and reading, and some had slates: but she with many other little girls, had never yet been called up to the table, except to receive their certificate; they had a few torn Primers, into which they looked if any chanced to come in; otherwise, they rested, talked and played among themselves, glad of the relaxation. She had been a year and one month going: in the course of that time the mistress had been changed; but Katy had not yet learned her alphabet.

This appeared too monstrous to be credited: the widow resolved to ascertain the fact; and on the following day she proceeded to the spot, at the hour when Katy usually attended; but had some difficulty in finding it. At length a narrow alley brought her to the door of a low, filthy-looking house, on entering which she was nearly suffocated by the effluvia exhaling from such a mass of little human beings, most squalid in appearance, and covered with the flue and stains of the mill. At

the upper end sat a woman, whose attention seemed riveted on a bonnet to which she was attaching a ribbon, while half a dozen children near her were scrawling on slates. The rest answered Katy's description; for no sooner was a visiter described by them than a few fragments of books were hastily produced, the noise of promiscuous talking ceased, and a monotonous hum commenced, as if they were learning a lesson, though it was easy to see no two books were opened at the same places, and several of them were held upside down. The sudden sound of this simultaneous hum roused the dame's attention, who, seeing a respectably-dressed person at the door, commenced the exercise of her calling. "Now, Betty Smith, has you done your copy yet? Show up that ere sum, Sukey. Keep to your spelling down there, till I'm ready for to hear you. Stand on one side, can't ye, and let the lady come in."

The lady, however had no wish to advance farther into such an atmosphere; she begged they might not disturb themselves, and then, singling out Katy, requested to know what progress she had made in her learning.

"Let's see, let's see," responded the school-mistress in a bustling way, "Kitty—Kitty Malony, Oh, she's been here a precious while afore ever I comed to the school. I spose she can write and cipter. Come here, Kitty."

Several of the children grinned, while poor Katy, with crimson cheeks, shyly approached the seat of authority.

"Come, come, none of your sulks!" said the chief, sharply, "here, take this, and read a bit."

Katy timidly replied that she could not yet read.

"You lazy warrmint!" ejaculated the governess, shaking her by the shoulder, "is that all, after the perdigious pains I've bestowed on you? Lauk, ma'am," she continued, addressing the widow, "them factory girls is the most uncorrectible idlers and dunces you ever see. Here is a few decent children, wot comes to me from private families, and though I don't take half the pains with them, they've ten times more learning nor all the factory girls put together. Come Sukey, love, read you."

Miss Sukey sidled up, carefully holding back her frock from coming into contact with Katy's soiled garments, and began to mouth out a lesson; but this being no part of the widow's business, she interrupted the performance: "I beg pardon, but my visit was to inquire about this little girl: her friends are anxious to have her taught to read."

"I know of nothing to hinder her," replied the mistress, sullenly.

Again the widow looked round on the crowded group: some were laughing, some yawning, others dozing, and not a few engaged in playing off practical jokes on their neighbours, but nothing resembling the work of education was going on, save in the little circle immediately surrounding the teacher. Suddenly, an old clock in the corner struck; and such a rush to the door ensued as well nigh overset her. The factory children disappeared in a moment, leaving the others in possession of the apartment.

Having been obliged to step out to make way for the little throng, the widow felt no inclination to re-enter the dwelling. She retraced her steps homeward, and on arriving was surprised to find the rector seated in her arm-chair, James's Bible in his hand, and the boy standing before him answering questions.

"I called in, Mrs. Green," he said, "because I like to visit such of my parishioners as I know are glad to see me: and I have been pleased, much pleased and highly gratified, to find your grandson so exceedingly well taught in the most important branch of learning." He spoke with a warmth that touched the poor widow's heart,—she replied,

"I humbly trust, sir, he is taught of God."

"I believe it, indeed: you have a gracious Master, my boy; go on in the good path, and may He strengthen, stablish, settle you!"

Tears stood in the eyes of James, as he turned them on his grandmother, well knowing what a solace she would find in this pastoral visit. The rector resumed, "Sit down, Mrs. Green, if I am not intruding on your time. How is all with you?"

The widow replied gratefully; and then, full of the scene she had just quitted, she described it to him, lamenting the

case of the poor little creatures who were so grossly cheated out of the education for which the woman was paid.

"It certainly is one of our great evils," replied the clergyman; "but how to remedy it we know not. The vast number of children renders many schools necessary: the act enforces the attendance of each, to be attested by a certificate, or the employer is liable to an information. Some of the mill-owners have established schools on their own ground, which are in the main pretty fairly conducted; but where this is not the case, the poorer children are obliged to find them where they can, and I am sorry to say the one you have visited is a specimen of a numerous class, where the chief, nay, the only trouble incurred by the nominal teacher is to give bits of paper, certifying the attendance of the child for two hours per day. A few pupils obtained from the families of small tradesmen around pay well, and get what they bargain for: but with respect to our poor little factory people, standing room, or at best a few benches to sit down on, with the privilege of handling some books of the kind you saw, is all they can expect. However, as I remarked, this is only one class, frequented by the most neglected of the children; we have very respectable schools in various parts of the town."

"But, sir, it is to the most neglected children, to those whose natural friends take no thought for them, and who are exposed to the worst examples at home, that good teaching is of the greatest importance." The Rector made no reply, and she resumed; "I have lately heard that the mills are visited by Inspectors and Superintendents, employed by the government, are they aware, sir, of this state of things?"

"Yes; it has been discovered, reported, and much pressed upon the notice of the Legislature, by some benevolent men who are labouring hard to improve matters among us."

"And can any Christian man possibly refuse to help in so good a work, sir?"

"Why, you see, Mrs. Green, all these things were still worse a few years ago; and the alterations made in the laws have been rather unpalatable to the majority of the mill-owners. They consider it very

hard on them to have the number of hours limited, and more so to be compelled to send their infant labourers to school. We cannot expect them all at once heartily to co-operate with the plans of those whom they consider innovators; and of course a great weight of wealth and influence is brought to bear upon the Parliamentary question as to a yet farther amelioration of the condition of the poor in their employment. But," he added, suddenly checking himself, "I am talking politics—a thing wholly at variance with my sacred calling."

The widow thought otherwise; she thought that any subject in which the glory of God and the welfare of the poor in the land were concerned, was perfectly and especially suited to the interest of a minister of the gospel: but it was clear the rector had a great dread of committing himself on this point, and that he reined-in many a kind and generous impulse rather than appear to do so. After a pause, he enquired for the other members of the family, particularizing Helen. James moved up to his grandmother, and in an anxious whisper said, "Do tell him." The widow hesitated, but after a moment acknowledged that Helen had been hurt in the mill.

"By the machinery?—not dangerously, I hope."

"No, sir, not dangerously, nor by the machinery."

"It was by the overlooker, sir," said James, deeply reddening; "he struck Helen a cruel blow, and bruised her shoulder."

"That is sad, very sad indeed," remarked the Rector, knitting his brow. "I should hope she did not provoke such rough usage by any misconduct?"

"Oh, sir," replied the boy, "Helen never did in all her life provoke any body to say a cross word to her; he beat her for crying when they taxed her with bad conduct. Oh, if you could only see Helen"—tears stopped his speech.

"Well, my boy, compose yourself. This is a matter for legal redress; and though I am the last person to recommend extreme proceedings, yet I must remind you, Mrs. Green, that in cases of wanton cruelty the delinquent should be made to know, that the magistrate beareth not the sword in vain." He spoke this with the

air of a man whose best feelings are roused; but presently resuming a more cautious manner, added, "Nevertheless, it is far better to avoid the recurrence of such an act than to come into collision with superiors. Some who have hastily appealed to the law, have soon wished they had rather taken a wrong patiently." After a few more kind words, he took his leave; and the widow gently remonstrated with James for indulging such strong feelings of resentment, where Helen had forcibly represented the duty of perfect forgiveness.

"It is not resentment, granny," answered the weeping boy, "at least not entirely. The gentleman was very kind: and I thought if ever it happened again he would be ready to stand up for us, where we have no friend at all—except God."

"Well, my love, I am glad it was not from an angry motive you did it. Had the clergyman been long here when I came home?"

James dried his eyes, and gave her an account of the conversation between them, which made a very favourable impression on her mind. The Rector evidently felt more than he wished to express, and she was soothed by that conviction. How prone we are to catch at any visible straw in the hour of distress, and feel more secure in grasping it than when the unseen arm of Omnipotence alone sustains us!

Notwithstanding the cautious wording of the Rector's remarks, she saw a depth of evil till then undiscovered, through his admissions respecting the schools. Compelled by a legal enactment to allow their poor little labourers a scanty portion of the day for the purposes of education, what a noble field was opened to the mill-owners for supplying an antidote to the worst evils of their system! She thought of Amelia Z. and imagined her, with others like her, devoting two hours of their vacant morning to the sweet and sacred task of superintending the instruction of their young servants in religious and useful knowledge; shaming vice, overawing insolence, encouraging modesty, industry and cleanliness, by the mere force of their frequent presence and occasional admonitions. A clean, airy room, regular arrangements, a few minutes allowed for thoroughly cleansing their soiled skin and brushing their

clothes, with easy, but distinct tasks assigned, and suitable rewards for such as excelled—all under the personal direction of the employer's family: oh, what a refreshment to body and mind would this have secured to the poor little toil-worn creatures! by what a tie of respectful affection, and consequent diligence and integrity in his service, would it have bound them to their master! But all seemed perverted by the demon of avarice, to aggravated evil. Could it be for a moment credited that those who accumulated their wealth by this species of labour were men professing a system of belief, one of the first and most vital articles of which was the certainty that they must each and all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of the deeds done in the body, to Him whose whole volume of inspiration is one continued prohibition of injustice and wrong? Did they really number themselves among His followers who emphatically reproved those who would have hindered the approach of little children to him, and who perpetually enforced on his disciples a tender concern for their welfare? Was it not enough to make their poverty a reason for defrauding them of all that childhood demands for its expansion into active, healthful youth; to imprison them during the sunshiny hours within cheerless walls; to bid them exchange the refreshing breeze of heaven for exhalations calculated to destroy, not to nourish, their delicate frames, to cramp the limbs that should then know perfect freedom, to overstrain the sinews that should be nursed into bulk and substance, to parch up the juices of which a more abundant supply was required; and while thus effectually poisoning the springs of bodily health and vigour, to leave the mind wholly exposed to the very worst actings of corrupt nature surrounded by every element of matured depravity—was not this enough, without begrudging them a poor two hours of such ordinary culture as might tend to raise them somewhat above the level of the beasts that perish—some-what above the insensible machinery against which their feeble limbs must toil in an agonizing race? Alas! while the beasts that perish, do indeed perish for ever—while the worn-out machinery falls to pieces and exists no more—those little

despised slaves have the seal of immortality impressed upon them: they are destined to an eternity of being; and Satan joyfully uses the instrumentality of man's heartless lust of gold to rivet the links of his infernal fetters on their souls, to secure them for his present prey, and with the help of a community of CHRISTIAN ENGLISH GENTLEMEN, to plunge them finally into the gulf "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

CHAPTER XIV.

RURAL SCENES.

THE broad shadow of a venerable oak was gradually lengthening as it lay across a field of pale stubble, beaten down to the smoothness of a grass-plat by the pressure of many feet on its rough but brittle points. The field was large, and its outline traced on three sides by lofty hedge-rows, the land-marks of untold generations, whence at intervals shot up, here the hollow stump of a patriarchal tree, with its few green shoots, the poor remains of pristine vigour, that had once flung many a branch on high, and overshadowed its native soil; there a vegetable monarch of later date, towering in the majesty of his leafy prime; and again, mantled in more tender green, the fairy aspirant to future greatness. At their base the hawthorn, the wild brier, the woodbine, and the sloe, spread their berries to the ripening ray, while that ambitious rustic vine, the bramble, forced its dark masses over all opposers, and gave promise of a plentiful crop to the children, who scanned its mellowing treasures, and then peered into the well-beaten nut-trees that formed a back ground to the picturesque hedge. Beautiful picture! Other lands may outvie us in many things; but the rich variety of an old English hedge-row, down from the topmost bough of its tall trees to the tiny flowers that laugh in the long grass below, and the cress that sucks the moisture from a coy rivulet in the scarcely perceptible channel across which a babe may stride—this variety of form and of tint, of foliage and fruit, defies

competition, and marks the hedge-row our own.

I have said that three sides of the field were thus bounded in. The fourth descended with an abrupt slope, its hedge lay too low to intercept the view, and whether by design or not, it was nearly destitute of trees, leaving a prospect open that terminated in the mighty main, which now heaved an unbroken surface of the purest, deepest blue against the horizon. It was on the opposite and higher portion of the field that the oak first mentioned stood; and the hillock, formed by an accumulation of grass-grown earth upon its enormous roots, afforded to those who reclined on it a full view of this magnificent distance.

But no pensive recluse had on that evening sought the spot for meditation: a large, and to say truth, a noisy party had made it their gathering-place. There might be seen the sun-burnt peasant, bare-headed, or with handkerchief knotted round his brow, in the sweat of which he had tilled the soil, and gathered in the harvest; there was the sober matron, with clean white cap and ample border, surrounded by a broad ribbon, her handkerchief neatly pinned over her gown, and confined by the fastenings of a check apron. There was the stout boy, exulting in his promotion to the stronger class of labourers, and the sprightly girl, comparing notes with her fellow-gleaners as to the handfuls of corn collected; and childhood in all its stages, revelling in the various enjoyments afforded by that annual treat:—it was harvest-home.

There are districts in the land still retaining much of the primitive character of English rusticity—places where the blight has not come; where the demoralizing swarm of railway excavators has never alighted, nor the firebrand of political rancour scattered its darkening smoke, nor the hell-born reptile of socialism trailed his venomous slime. Sin there is, and sorrow; folly and remorse; the spirit that is within us, lusting to envy, bears many a bitter fruit, and man is rebellious, and God is provoked every day. Still, as compared with the rest of the population, these villagers retain much of what may be called the virtue and simplicity of their forefathers; and like their own hedge-rows,

bear much that is beautiful to the sight, and good for use, while even the thorns and the poisons that lurk there appear in a less repulsive aspect than in the busier haunts of men. Such was the place whose cottages contributed their inhabitants on the present festive occasion; when the husbandman who with long patience had waited for the precious fruits of the earth, saw them safely built into the stack, or deposited in the barn.

The owner of the field was the principal landed proprietor in this place; and the spot was chosen among many, just because it had, from time immemorial, been the scene of the annual celebration. This year was one of unusual abundance, and not a day of adverse weather had thwarted the harvestmen. The 'Squire was pleased at the diligence with which they had availed themselves of the favourable season; the men were gratified by his praises, and no less by his liberality; while the women and elder children, who had found plentiful employment too upon his extensive lands, had similar causes for gladness. As for the little ones, they were delighted to gambol and exhibit their activity in the presence of the 'Squire's family, whose daughters took no small pains in disciplining the urchins at their infant school, and marshalling them for an orderly march to the church door. Each, both old and young, enjoyed that peculiar feeling, the value of which the poor are seldom aware of until they experience its absence, "My employer knows me; I am not in his sight a mere piece of machinery, regarded only while it works in his service. There's a tie between us that he, though a rich man, would not disown. If he is every thing to me, I and mine are something to him." It was this thought, unconsciously cherished, that lighted up every countenance with smiles as the 'Squire's family approached the happy groups; and the bow and the curtsy that respectfully welcomed them were given with greater alacrity under the sense of that individual recognition on the part of their superiors.

And did not God intend that so it should be? The Bible yields an answer in many various ways, but all in the affirmative; and man's heart cries out against a violation of what he feels to be a law of his nature's God.

A light waggon was now seen slowly winding its way from the direction of the great house, accompanied by the domestics of the family, between whom and the villagers many neighbourly greetings took place while the freight was handed out, consisting of good cheer in great variety and abundance, which was soon deposited on the long tables set out in front of the oak, and ample justice rendered to it by the guests. While enjoying themselves they were farther gratified by the approach of one who possessed a full share in their affectionate respect, the village pastor, our old friend Mr. Barlow; for this was L—, and these were the friends, and such the scenes, which the poor widow had been cheated into exchanging for the wretchedness of the factories.

"Well, Richard," said the good man, laying his hand on the shoulder of a youth whose sunburnt features beamed with love as he looked up to the speaker. "Well, Richard, you have had a busy time of it."

"We have, sir, and a beautiful harvest has God sent us: a finer was never gathered in. Do you know, sir, I reckoned the ears upon one stalk, and the grains upon one ear, in different parts of the fields, and you would hardly know how to believe me if I told you the amount."

"Yes, Richard, I should believe it, for how great is the sum of his mercies! If we would count them they are more in number than the sand. I am glad, my dear boy, that you take note of them: you seem to get on very well in your work."

"Yes, sir; I am thankful to say I have given satisfaction, and have got my place bettered, and my wages raised. The under-gardener got a hurt, and I took his place for a few days, and owing to what the head-man said of me, the 'Squire told him to employ me in the gardens to oversee some work in the improvements, and his honour was so good as to tell me he thought he should keep me near the house."

"That is well; but don't let it draw you into any expensive habits. Servants have greater temptations in that respect than field-labourers."

"It must be a strong temptation," said Richard, rather bluntly, "that would make me throw away my earnings."

The clergyman looked at him, and read

in the half-frowning expression of his brow the thought that he well knew nerved that young arm by day, and moulded the nightly dream of the fond boy. Richard continued with a downcast look of abstraction to press the blade of his knife upon the rough table before him, until he had bent it nearly double, when Mr. Barlow, in a lower voice said, "How long is it, exactly, since they went, Richard?"

In a moment the brow was smooth, the lip smiled again, and the eyes, softened into the expression of infancy, were once more raised to the enquirer's face, as he replied, "A year, and two months, sir, and a week, and a few days."

"What an accurate time-keeper is true love!" thought the minister, but he said it not. Richard continued to read his looks, and resumed, "The last letter I got did not seem to be written in good spirits—that is, it was merry but not cheerful like. Somehow, sir, it made me laugh, but my heart did not feel warm and comfortable after reading it." And Richard seemed puzzled how to describe what his auditor perfectly understood.

"Who was it from?"

"From Mary, sir; and it seemed written at different times." Here the boy again dropped his eyes, and tried the temper of his blade by bending it as before.

"Have a care of that knife, Richard: edged playthings are dangerous. Go on with your feast; by and by we will talk more together of the absent."

"I'd rather talk now, if you please, Mr. Barlow, I've eaten and drank enough."

"But others have not; and I must go round the table: afterwards we will speak together."

This conversation passed in a low tone, the youth being seated at a corner, which enabled them to discourse with comparative privacy. He was forced to acquiesce; but more he ate not; following with frequent and rather impatient glances the slow progress of the Pastor among his flock; and between whiles contemplating in every possible point of view a bunch of honey-suckle that adorned the breast of his open jacket.

In fact, Richard had cause for uneasiness without being well able to explain even to himself what it was. The heavy

cost of postage had rendered the interchange of letters very rare; and such as did pass were of that meagre, formal character generally observable when the parties, having had no practice in epistolary communication, and being accustomed to the unrestrained freedom of daily personal intercourse, feel utterly at a loss to express by the hand what would overflow rapidly enough from the lip, or even the eye. Ripening years, and being thrown upon his isolated exertions, together with the success hitherto attending his diligent progress, had insensibly led Richard into new trains of thought as to the future. His present loneliness was but a probation, contentedly submitted to in the fond prospect which, at the end of a vista of toil, seemed to shine in all the sunlight beauty of a young man's dream. A cottage was there, and in that cottage was pictured a group of happy faces, for the originals of which he had only to recal the domestic party recently broken up: and those among his rustic companions who marvelled that Richard Green should be at once the most silent and the most cheerful of their laborious band, knew not how the buoyancy of his animal spirits was sustained by the vivid imaginings of a mind more delicately moulded than those around him.

Mr. Barlow had touched the key-note at the precise time when all within him was best attuned for a response. The joyous occasion, the loveliness of the landscape, the softening effect of the hour as the broad and beautiful harvest-moon gradually rose from the extreme verge of that ocean belt, and mingled her cool light with the crimson dyes reflected from the western sky—all combined to render the tide of fond recollection and fonder anticipation overpowering. Mr. Barlow's course seemed interminable: Richard would wait no longer. On a sudden, he recollected that every creature belonging to his father's cottage, and its more immediate neighbours, was then present; and following the impulse of the moment he arose, stole away, and by short cuts over the now deserted fields he quickly reached the spot which of late he had rather avoided.

Little alteration had been made in it; and what little there was the mingled effect of twilight and a luxuriant growth

of unaltered trees sufficed to veil. He drew near, not as he was wont, with half-averted eyes unwilling to meet the spectacle of its alien inmates, but under the happy consciousness of being wholly alone and unobserved. Throwing his folded arms on the paling, with knee bent upon a stone where Willy used to sit to watch the manœuvres of his ducks, and with his temple pressed to the stem of a yellow broom-tree which he had himself trained to ornament the little gate, he fixed an open gaze on the beloved home of his childhood, and gave himself up to visions of the past until it seemed strange that no smiling face had yet looked through the casement, or appeared at the door, to welcome his return. A dog which had been ranging the fields, now returning to his charge, seemed resolved to compensate for his truancy by the loudness of his menacing bark at the intruder. "Ah," sighed Richard, "I am a stranger now, and any body's cur may warn me off." There was bitterness in the thought, enough to put his pleasant dream to flight. He slowly rose, and measuring himself against a rustic pole to which the linen lines were usually fastened, close by where he stood, the result struck him. "How tall I am! The 'Squire has put me among his men, too; and I may as well take a man's heart, and set to work in good earnest to make my way in the world for them." He turned away, but again looked round: the recollection of the parting night came full upon him—the chapter, the prayer, the stifled anguish of the hour, and the burst of lonely sorrow that had succeeded it all rose with perfect distinctness to his mind. He clasped his hands, and breathed a fervent supplication to those loved ones now so far distant; and for himself, that he might be made a means of abiding comfort to them. It soothed his excited feelings; and as he slowly paced his homeward path, the wonted evening hymn of the family in harmonious, though subdued and plaintive tones, cheered his solitary way far more effectually than the sprightliest associates could have done.

Richard was a pious youth; but, like the rest of God's children, he had a continual battle to fight with a deceitful heart, a corrupt nature, and an insidious tempter.

Immorality in every form he abhorred; and showed his abhorrence by carefully avoiding the company of such as, in that respect, differed from him: but, like Mary, he had much latent pride, a great deal of self-confidence, unknown to himself and unsuspected by others, for his manners were the reverse of forward or assuming; and a sensitiveness amounting to irascibility on points nearly connected with his family respectability or personal independence. Happily for himself and others, none breathed the air of L. who could utter a disparaging or unkind remark concerning the absentees of his household; or it is probable Richard Green would have astonished those who best knew and most loved him.

Nor was the fervency of this attachment to be marvelled at: left, by his father's death, the eldest male inhabitant of the cottage, the boy, even in early childhood, had learned to acknowledge the claim upon his protection which no truly masculine character can fail to recognize on the part of the more helpless sex. Often had little Richard Green looked admiringly on while the monarch of their small fowl-yard bent a patronizing eye upon the hens and chickens, in whose favour he had relinquished some choice morsel scratched up by his persevering industry from the soil: the call that summoned his feathered protégés to enjoy it never failed to bring Richard also; and with delighted interest did the child contemplate the character which he regarded as his future model.

One day he had confided to Helen his cogitations on the subject, a broken potatoe being the prize under discussion among the fowls. "Look," said he, at Strut, what a good fellow he is. The old black hen, you know, is Speck's mother, and the cock was Speck's chicken; so Blacky is Strut's granny and all the tiny chicks belong to his family. Now you see Helen, how he goes about peeping and scratching and hunting, and when he finds a nice thing, instead of gobbling it up all alone, he calls them, and looks on better pleased to see them enjoy it than to eat it himself. And then if any body meddles with the hens or chickens, what a fuss he gets into! We are good friends; he follows me about, and pecks from my hand; but if I catch a fowl, and

frighten it, bounce he flies at me, tries to strike with his spurs, and tells me as plain as he can speak he is going to tear my eyes out."

"It is pretty to see so much love and courage in a poor bird, Richard."

"I think, Helen, it is love makes him brave, for he will run away on his own account, though he fights on theirs. But I was going to say I will be like Strut when I am a man. I will take care of my granny as he does of his, and of the rest as he does of the chickens. To be sure I have no mother, as Strut has; but then I have you, Helen, and I will take care of you, and give you a big share out of all I can earn."

With these feelings strengthening and expanding daily in his bosom, Richard Green, now almost a man in age and size, exhibited a specimen of manly English character, such as it will be found where men have not herded together in pursuit of selfish ends until all the finer touches are worn away, and "every one for himself" becomes the heartless maxim. Would young Green have given credit to any body who had told him that thousands of delicate little girls were habitually oppressed, overworked, starved, beaten, and that by men, frequently by their own fathers, to swell the gains of their labour? Fathers and elder brothers are very often employed in the mills, as spinners, slobbers, &c., with liberty to engage and to pay the children of their department. They are themselves paid by the piece, consequently it becomes their interest to have the given work completed in the shortest possible time; and if they have young daughters, or little sisters, they of course save or rather gain considerably by employing them: and it is an awful fact, that under the hardening influence of covetousness or the cravings of wretched want, more barbarous usage awaits the girl at the hand of a father or brother than that of a stranger. No tyranny is so dreadful as domestic tyranny: and he who sacrifices natural affection at the shrine of mammon, becomes a monster among God's works.

But of all this Richard Green had no conception: many anxious thoughts would arise to trouble him, concerning those so

fondly, so exclusively loved; but nothing resembling the reality had ever crossed his imagination. At times, he thought of the shows, the gay shops, the fine people, the lots of company that a town must contain, and the sigh that would escape arose from no desire to share such gratifications, but rather from a half-jealous doubt whether they might not wile away from him a portion of the only thing he coveted—the love of that endeared circle. "People in towns are very polite, and dress smart, and pay compliments," thought Richard, "but what is the good of that? Helen used to say she never should see a ribbon so fine as the rainbow, nor any crowd of people so amusing as the bustling waves of yonder sea, and the birds that dip and paddle among them. No, no, the town won't drive me out of their minds; or if it does a little by day, they will remember me when the Bible is spread open; and put my name foremost in the prayer."

On the evening above referred to, this tide of thought had set in with more than its wonted force: it occupied him, even till midnight, haunted his dreams, and oppressed his spirit when rising with the lark to pursue his daily toil. It was, therefore, with no small degree of gladness that he received a message from Mr. Barlow, desiring to see him before noon; and with a lighter heart he repaired to the parsonage, assured of being indulged in the subject so precious to him: nor was he mistaken, for the pastor at once entered upon it, making particular inquiries as to the date and contents of his last letter from M., and displaying an anxiety that gradually awoke in Richard's mind a sensation of alarm.

"Have you heard any thing about them yourself, sir?" he asked.

Mr. Barlow did not give a direct reply. "It is natural, Richard, that one who has watched over you all from the cradle, I may say, should feel a little anxious for those who are so far removed: particularly as your dear grandmother is aged, and has passed all her life surrounded by kind neighbours and old friends, who are different from the common acquaintance she may meet with in a large town, where each is too much occupied in pur-

suing his own interest, amid great competition, to pay much regard to the stranger that is within their gates."

"But you know, sir, my aunt Wright and her family are there."

"True. Has your grandmother written much of them as being affectionate, pious relations?"

Richard was struck, for the first time, with this omission: he looked perplexed and distressed. Mr. Barlow resumed. "I would not, my dear lad, have you alarm yourself; but from the general report I have had, and other circumstances, it would be a relief to my mind to know positively what prospects of comfort our absent friends have for the approaching winter. Our letters do not furnish this information, and I have some notion of letting you go and make inquiries. A friend of mine, some miles off, wants to send a trusty messenger to M., on business that you are very well able to transact; he will pay your expenses, and allow you for the loss of time; and last night I got your Master's leave for a week's absence before you enter upon your new employment. Of course, you are willing to go."

"Willing! oh, sir, Mr. Barlow, ever since I can remember, you have been, next to God, the best friend to me and mine; but you never, never in all my life, did me such a kindness as this, sir!" And he burst into tears.

"Well, well, my dear boy, I hope it will all be for the best; but it cost me some thought and prayer before I could make up my mind to send you even for such a purpose, into the busy, wicked world of M., and I must have your promise, Richard, your positive promise, that you will not remain there, but come back again within the time specified."

"Surely, sir. I go on a message, and I would not deceive or disappoint my employer."

"Right: you must also promise not to make any engagement to interfere with your service here. A stout, healthy, active young fellow like you might perhaps find ready employment, and the temptation would be great to remain with your family: but do not yield to it: you would repent when too late having cut off from them the prospect of returning to their native place, which by God's blessing on

your industry here, they may be enabled to do. Your master, the squire, is well pleased with you, and means to help you on, if you continue the sober, industrious, steady lad that he now considers you to be."

Richard cheerfully promised; and after a few more admonitions he was directed to go to the gentlemen whose messenger he was to be: and while the benevolent pastor resumed his studies, the young peasant sallied forth, glad to give vent to his exuberant joy by bounding along, and leaping over every object in his way. Whatever apprehension might momentarily have clouded his mind had now vanished in the blaze of rapturous delight at the certain, the near prospect of beholding again all that his heart loved. His fancy pictured the meeting—the delightful evening he should pass, seated round the tea-table with every smiling face turned full towards him, listening to his budget of news. "Of course," thought he, "things will be smarter, and my country jacket will look awkward among the town fashions; but they won't like me a bit the less for that, certainly, I shall look down upon them; for the tallest of them must be a head shorter than me—thanks to country air and good hard work," he added, leaping over a five-barred gate, and giving chase to a playful young colt that bounded away on his sudden appearance.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BENCH OF JUSTICE.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning when Richard Green, after thirty-six hours' hard travelling, sprang from the roof of the coach in M., and having shouldered his basket, set off at a rapid pace in quest of the abode on which his thoughts had so long dwelt. To find the street was not difficult; by dint of inquiry he also discovered the obscure lane; but when, after threading for some time the filthy maze, he had forced himself and his basket through the narrow entrance of the court, he felt provoked at having lost so much

time, for certainly this could not be the place. However, he mechanically asked if the Widow Green lived there; and was answered by a gesture—a dirty woman, with a pipe in her mouth, pointing up a staircase in a comparatively large but ruinous building. He mounted the stairs, more to get away from the disagreeable-looking people who gathered round, than with any expectation of finding what he sought; and entering a miserable room, the floor of which was clean though broken, and seeing nothing but two heaps of bedding, one-half concealed by a curtain, a small table and two or three chairs, he would have withdrawn, had not a faint voice inquired, "Who is there?" and at the same moment his eye fell upon a wooden box familiar to his recollection. He stood for a moment in stupid amaze, then let the basket hastily down, which began to feel too heavy, as a faintness came over him, for a death-like face, raised from a mattress in the corner, met his gaze, and the next instant his name, in a scream of wild joy, broke the stillness of the apartment. He rushed across the room, and sinking on his knees beside the bed, had in a moment the thin arms of James clasped round his neck, while many an endearing expression strove to win a reply, but in vain. Richard could only drop his face upon his brother's pillow, and sob with an anguish of which his heart had never till that moment conceived the existence.

"Now, Richard, darling Richard, do be calm," cried James, as he stroked back the curls from his brother's burning forehead: "You will hurt yourself; and you will hurt me," he added in a tone so plaintive that it recalled Richard to a sense of the injury he was doing the dying boy. He drew back, seated himself on the bed's edge, and holding in his the shrunken hands of his brother, gazed at them and in his face, with the looks of one who has in this world no ray of comfort left.

"You see I am in a weak way," said James, "and indeed nobody expected me to hold out so long. I had only one wish left, and that was to see your dear face again, and even that was to be granted to me, a wicked sinful boy, by the great mercy of my own blessed Lord. O, Richard, you don't know how happy I am: my sins are

forgiven, my pardon's sealed, and I am going to God. What king upon a throne would not change with me? He must give up his crown before long; but I shall receive mine, and once I get it, I can never lose it again. I shall wear it always, Richard, day and night, except when I take it off to cast it down before the throne of the Lamb, who was slain, and has redeemed me to God by his blood."

The solemn yet joyous fervour of the boy's voice and manner, went to his brother's heart. Again Richard kissed his brow, stroked his skeleton hands, and at last said, "My darling James, I did not expect this. But oh, where are the rest?" and he seemed to dread the reply.

"They are all out: Willy is at the mill, and granny is gone with Helen and Mary to —" he stopped abruptly.

"To where, Gemmy?"

"Give me some of that drink, Richard."

A little toast and water stood on the table, and while James eagerly swallowed some, Richard cried, "Stop," ran to his hamper, and drew forth a little basket of ripe fruit. "Oh, how nice, how sweet, how delicious!" exclaimed the boy, as the juice refreshed his parched mouth: "it is worth a guinea a drop." "And you might have it for the gathering, if you had only been left to stay at home," thought his brother, but he said it not: he only repeated his inquiry for the rest of the party.

"I will tell you," said James: but first, Richard, we must lift up our hearts to God, for some of the comfortable words of his promises. You know he has told us we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven; and that before we reign with Christ we must suffer with him. All this, and a great deal more, we must remember: and also that we are not to fear them which kill the body."

"Kill!"

"Or hurt: even if it went as far as killing, we are safe; but this is not near so bad: not at all like it. You see, Richard, the mill-people are sometimes very cruel: they don't love God, and how should they love one another? Our Mary provoked them, by taking part with a poor little orphan girl, and certainly she did it in too much anger. She was beaten —"

"Who? Mary! who beat Mary? who

dared to touch my little Mary?" and every fibre of Richard's body quivered with rage.

"Hush, hush: she was not much hurt, indeed: it was not so much a beating, as the habit of hitting and pushing her about. Granny tried every thing, but in vain: at last she got a sight of the superintendent, and told him all; and he has brought it into court. They are now before the magistrates."

"Where is the court?" said Richard, rising with a look of stern determination.

"It is not far: but if you go, don't let them see you. The surprise of it would put every thing out of their heads; and justice would not be got, may be, for want of proper evidence."

There was too much reason in this to be resisted. Richard acknowledged it, and promised to keep out of sight. Then, after settling the poor boy comfortably, with a supply of fruit and a slice of country-cake, he bent his way to the court-house.

Richard had never been present at any kind of trial: filled with a deep reverence for the majesty of English law, his imagination pictured something strikingly solemn and awful in every branch of its administration. He wondered at, while he admired, his grandmother's resolution, in seeking public redress for an injury inflicted on the helpless orphan committed to her; and he felt as though the family was now to be made the general talk of M. Feelings wholly new to him took possession of his mind, and he scarcely knew how he arrived at the point of his destination—a shaded corner, where he could both see and hear without being exposed to much observation. Several men had chosen the same spot, seemingly more interested than they wished to appear in what was going forward.

On the bench sat some gentlemen variously occupied: one was examining a witness, another making memoranda; a third had a newspaper before him, from which he looked off to take a survey of the court through a fashionable eye-glass. Two were discussing some point that seemed to interest them greatly, and another appeared to be amusing himself with the uncouth phrases in which a poor

lad was giving evidence. The witnesses were together, in such a place that Richard could not see them, except when they stepped forth; and the audience was composed of a motley assemblage, whose general characteristic seemed to be want of cleanliness; and who rendered the close room scarcely bearable.

The case then under examination was one of a drunken squabble: it was soon disposed of, and another called on. This consisted of informations laid by the superintendent against a mill-owner for employing children very much under age. "Now," said a bystander to his next neighbour just beside Richard, "now mark how many excuses will be brought forward."

Richard was marking it all, with an intentness that needed no stimulus. He saw a movement among the gentlemen who were doing nothing, on the bench, and also saw an evident desire not to appear interested in what was going on. The first charge produced had for its subject a puny little boy, who was represented to have worked already a year in the mills, under a certificate of being fourteen, whereas he still wanted some months of that age. He had, it was stated, been concealed in various ways on the former visits of the inspectors; but this time the movement was not quick enough, the superintendent caught him; and being struck by his very childish appearance, instituted an inquiry, the result of which placed him, and several others, before the court. The book-keeper of the firm produced his volume of certificates, and showed one in the boy's name, signed by the surgeon, and countersigned by a magistrate, declaring him to be of full age at the time of admission. "Please, sir," he added, holding the book towards one of the gentlemen on the bench, "to see whether this countersignature is not yours." The gentleman glanced at it, and nodded. "And here," pursued the clerk, "is the doctor, who no doubt will acknowledge his hand-writing." This was also done.

"We object," said the attorney for the prosecution, "that the boy's appearance is so palpably conclusive against his being any thing like the age specified, that even if any professional man certified him to be

of that age, no mill-owner was justified in receiving the testimony, and employing the child."

"What" replied a cunning-looking little man who was retained by the defendant, "would my friend recommend us to give the lie to a distinct assertion, verified by a highly honourable professional gentleman, and counter-signed by a worthy, upright, administrator of the laws?"

"With regard to the latter," resumed the adversary, "it is well known the magistrate does not see the child: he attaches, as a matter of form, his signature to that of the professional man upon whose judgment and veracity he can rely. The magistrate is wholly free from imputation of blame."

"There now," said Richard's neighbour, who was no other than South, "there's an evasion for you. The law, making allowance for possible mistakes, and so forth, on the surgeon's part, provides that a magistrate should also see the child, and if he thinks it all right, then he is to sign too. Instead of that, some dozens of the doctor's certificates are sent to his worship; and he, as his leisure may serve, scribbles his name and sends them back. And you see, so far from getting blamed, his constant neglect of a plain duty is pleaded as an excuse for itself!"

The doctor was now appealed to, and requested to look first at his signature, then at the boy. He admitted that the certificate was certainly his, and that the boy, if so old, was remarkably small of his age: but that he had some positive assurance from his friends, or he should not have passed him.

"This paper," persisted the accuser, "declares the boy to be of *the ordinary strength and appearance* of fourteen years."

"Yes; that is the form supplied by the act; we are limited to one way of expressing it. His parents certainly showed me the baptismal register, or in some way satisfied me of the fact."

"Where are your parents?" asked the magistrate, addressing the boy.

"I don't know, sir."

"Did they bring you to the doctor to be certified?"

"Yes, sir."

"And what has become of them?"

"I don't know, sir."

"He must be sworn. Boy, do you know the nature of an oath?"

The wretched child answered by repeating some of the most common and blasphemous modes of execration, which, to Richard's great horror, drew forth a peal of laughter, some on the bench more than smiling.

"Pho!" said the presiding magistrate, angrily, "Do you know, sir what will become of those who take a false oath?"

"I have heard some say that it is bad to swear, sir."

"Do you go to church, and say your prayers?"

"No, sir."

"Do you know any thing about God and the Bible?"

"No, sir."

"Go along. Well, gentlemen, we must dismiss this case, I fear. There is a complete break in the evidence, nobody appearing to disprove the doctor's assertion, which none of us can be inclined to doubt, as to his having had a certificate of baptism shown him by the boy's parents. Nobody could think of administering an oath to such a little heathen. Call the next case."

South, with a grin, observed, "Calling the next case is a good way to save time. If he had said, Is any one present who can throw any light on this matter? I'd have stepped up at once. The boy is even younger than he confesses to, and the doctor at first refused to pass him: but the parents did the usual trick; they went to a parson and had him baptized, giving just what age they pleased. The parson put it down in the register, and furnished them with a copy. They went again to the doctor, and he being of course too busy to glance at the date of baptism, which would have betrayed the trick, looked only at the age, and passed the boy. I happen to know he was well thrashed at home for letting the superintendent catch him, and for owning, in his fright, that he was so young. You see what good effect the promise of a worse beating has had on him. As to his ignorance, that is no lie. More than a year he has had the *benefit* of the education clause, and he does not know to-day who made him!"

While this explanation, to which Rich-

ard could not help listening, was going on, another similiar case was disposed of, some technical flaw appearing in the very outset. South remarked, he wondered the superintendents would persist in bringing them forward, seeing how many loopholes the other party found to creep out at. No more of this class appeared: but a very long string of names was now heard, appended to an accusation of habitually over-working the young children to whom they belonged. Richard was struck with the benevolent interest manifested by the gentlemen on the bench when this was announced: but South's bitter whisper spoiled his gratification. "Ay, now they're all alive. Working over-hours is too great an advantage to be tolerated in a neighbour; and no doubt some of them informed against him. Self-interest is a capital watchman. But let them prove what they may, the principal offender has two good friends on the bench. The presiding judge is proprietor of an establishment in another town, holding constant dealings with him in the way of trade; and that quiet looking old gentleman, who has said nothing yet, but is now beginning to handle pen and ink, is his own father-in-law."

"That's a great shame," said the person addressed.

"Yes: before the amended act as they call it, came in force, I'll be bound such a case as they're now going to prove, and which I don't think will be even defended, would have stood the accused in two or three hundred pounds. He could not then have had a connexion on the bench; and the lowest penalty was twenty pounds for each offence. Now we shall see."

Seven children had been selected, and proof the most decisive was given that they had all been cruelly overworked, by various devices, including that of keeping them hard at their labour during the hours allotted for schooling. No defence was set up: the witnesses gave their evidence, no questions were put, nothing elicited beyond their voluntary statements; and the magistrates having consulted together, their decision was made known with as much brevity as might be. They held the case proven, and adjudged the criminal to pay a fine—the fine of two shillings and sixpence.

South's neighbour was going to speak; "Hush," said he, "There is another charge coming on in behalf of the same complainants."

This was a charge of having worked the aforesaid seven children without school certificates, thereby defeating the purposes of the act. This also was admitted, and the culprit was fined again to the amount of two shillings and sixpence, over and above that already imposed. The agent, with a smile, laid down two half-crowns, in the name of his employer, and so the matter ended.

"Good," said South, with his peculiar grin: "five shillings for seven children worked to the verge of the grave—for this is merely one instance picked out from a year's overwork—and kept in the blessed state of ignorance that helped little Tommy out of his difficulty just now. We shall have a still more curious display by-and-by, when the summons for altering certificates, making false entries, keeping no time-books, and I know not what besides, comes on against the great, wealthy firm of A. But I believe the next on the paper is a charge of ill usage, not affecting the owners, and which the poor old woman Green has been put up to bringing. She will only make bad worse, I'm afraid."

Richard's agitation, on hearing these words, may be imagined. A cold damp stood on his forehead, and for a moment he felt faint: but his frame, braced by his native sea-breeze and healthful toil, was proof against the united effects of a long journey, excessive emotion, and the yet more trying atmosphere that oppressed his lungs. He rallied, shifted his place so as to get a more distinct view of the table, and at the same time to be equally near South, whom he now regarded as a sort of friend, from the compassionate manner in which he had spoken of one so dear to him, and also to secure the support of a small pillar round which he twined his arm.

The case came on. John Roy, over-looker to the Messrs. Z. was summoned for various acts of unnecessary severity to Mary Green, one of the factory labourers under his charge, particularly with having, on a certain day kicked her on the shins, so as to hurt and bruise her considerably.

This charge was also brought at the instance of the superintendent: and, having been stated, Mary Green was called to substantiate the facts.

It was only by clinging with a desperate hold to his pillar, that the young brother resisted the magnetic force drawing him to place himself beside the trembling orphan-child, to make her cause his own, and to shelter her in his bosom from the rude stare of the many eyes turned upon her. He did resist it however, and gazed with anguish on the altered being before him. Emaciated, feeble, poorly clad, and with an expression of care, mingled with something quite foreign to the artless simplicity of little Mary's former face, she stood there, the hectic crimson of her cheek and brow soon giving way to a paleness sadly contrasted with the sunburnt hue of the village child; and the momentary tremor of her frame succeeded by an air more bold than Richard was prepared to see. He listened breathlessly for the first tones of her happy voice: they too were changed—they were become shrill and, for her age, almost harsh.

The magistrate inquired of her concerning the nature of the oath she was about to take: Mary answered readily, emphatically, almost proudly, as to her perfect understanding of it. She was then sworn, and deposed to a great deal of persecution, all owing as she said, to her taking the part of a poor desolate little child, whose father was lately dead. The court abruptly interposed, telling her to confine herself to the facts of the assault recently committed, nothing that had not occurred within fourteen days of the inspector's last visit being admissible in evidence. This sadly curtailed poor Mary's story; for the circumstance took place within half an hour of the limited time, and of course she could only state the bare fact. When called on to exhibit the mark, she replied the discolouration was nearly gone, but the swelling and soreness remained: and the doctor who saw it, and ordered a lotion, could bear witness that it had been a severe blow.

"And who is this doctor?"

She named a person, who, one of the gentlemen observed was no doctor, but an obscure retail apothecary.

"We are too poor to employ a regular

doctor, sir," said Mary; "but he promised to come and describe the hurt."

"He knows his own interest too well for that," muttered South.

"What witnesses have you to prove the assault?" said the magistrate to the attorney; who replied that one on whom he chiefly depended had not yet appeared; however he would put forward another in the mean time, whose childish aspect would not, he hoped, be objected to. The accused then began to cross-question Mary.

"On your oath, now, Miss, did you not give me impertinence enough to provoke much more than the push that I accidentally gave you?"

"No," she replied, firmly, "I gave you no impertinence; you did not push, but kicked me; and it was not by accident, but design."

"Hey-day? don't look so fierce, or you'll injure your own cause. Have you not been constantly bullying me and everybody else about this Irish beggar whom you affect to patronize?"

"I don't know what you call bullying: I have seen poor little Katy ill-treated among you from the first; and I took her part as well as I could."

"Oh, you did. Now please to inform the court in what manner you took her part, if not by railing and blustering?"

Mary was perplexed: she knew very well, but somehow she could not describe how she had taken Katy's part. No time was allowed her to collect her ideas. The magistrate said it was useless to go into such particulars, as it might naturally be supposed the child was saucy—she looked it—but that did not justify an assault, and he must hear the witnesses.

Mary drew aside, and a diminutive little creature, plump, but appearing not more than nine years old, was put forward. She seemed overwhelmed with terror, and looked round as if for some encouraging face; trembling all over, and evidently ready to sob.

"How old are you, little one?"

"Please, sir, I don't know," faltered Katy.

"And what do you know about an oath?"

The child seemed a little roused by this query, and answered more distinctly, "Please your Honour, sir, I know if I tell

a lie it will make my Lord God angry with me, and grieve the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ says, 'He that telleth lies is of the devil.' I must speak the truth, sir."

"One, at any rate, has been well taught in the mills," remarked another magistrate.

"Not a bit, I warrant you," whispered South. "She learnt it all at the poor widow's. That child is one of a batch to whom the priest gave certificates of age, in a pious fraud, to support her father, who knew nothing about such things, and did just as the rogues in the place bade him; but listen," he added, as Katy, having been sworn, stood more erect and confident to tell the whole truth in the love and fear of God. The very act of pressing that blessed book to her lips seemed to have revived and refreshed her.

"Well, now, as shortly as you can, what do you know of this assault?"

Katy detailed the circumstances; but the discovery of her being Mary's protégé certainly told against her. She was severely cross-examined; but, instead of flinching under it, her Irish blood seemed to be completely up, and when asked by the accused whether Mary Green was not an impudent hussey, giving bad language to her superiors, and quarrelling with all around her, she replied in great wrath, "It's yourself that ought to be ashamed to set your two eyes on me, and you just after saying that. Och, but it's a false spaker you are!"

"Your worships see," said the over-looker, turning to the bench, "what meek lambs I have to tend."

A laugh ran through the court, and Katy, to the astonishment of her judges, said something in Irish.

"Come, what was that?" cried the attorney for the defence, "I insist on knowing what she said."

"You must repeat it in English," observed the bench.

"And I will, your honour. It was the verse of a psalm that my father used to say out of the Irish Bible, when Helen Fleetwood's character was tried to be taken away. The English is, 'The lying lips shall be put to silence that cruelly, disdainfully, and spitefully speak against the righteous.'"

"Bravo, bravo!" murmured South. Then turning to Richard, whose quick

breathing had attracted his notice, he added, "that Helen Fleetwood is one of the best girls alive, but they mauled her reputation in the cursed mill. The child's father was a downright heathen, a wild Irishman and in a galloping consumption, but those Greens took him in, poor as they were getting, and taught him, and got somebody to read the Irish Bible to him, and, in short, made a Christian of the poor fellow before he died. Isn't that little one a fine specimen of good teaching?"

But he got no reply beyond a nod. Richard could not have spoken, had the world's welfare been at stake. By this time Katy had been reprimanded and sent down, and a heavy-looking lad was put in her place. He was sworn, but the testimony that he gave was so confused, so unintelligible, and even contradictory, that they would not hear it. South remarked the overlooker's presence was enough, that the young fellow was intimidated, and dared not speak truth.

"Go along, sir," said the magistrate. "Are we to have no decent witness out of the many who must have been by?"

None appeared. Some whispering went on at the side for the prosecution, and then Helen Fleetwood was called.

"There, now, look at her," exclaimed South, pushing Richard's elbow, "and tell me if any man with a heart in his body could slander or ill-treat that girl."

Look at her! Richard did look at her until his sight seemed to fail. Could it be Helen? The figure, taller and much slighter, was her's, and the features too were the same; but that deadly white never belonged to her face, nor that prominence to her eyes, nor that stoop to her shoulders. Still less was the fixed expression of sorrow any part of the Helen Fleetwood of Richard's boyish love. Yet the sweetness of her countenance was increased to something almost heavenly; and though the dimple had disappeared from her hollow cheek, a calm smile seemed to hang upon her lip, when, in reply to the usual query, she expressed her belief in the omniscience of God, and her consciousness that in taking an oath she was inviting his especial observance of what she should say. She then modestly, but clearly and distinctly, described the treatment experienced by Mary; and positively

denied that she had, on that occasion, provoked it by any intemperate language or improper deportment. She added, that being herself employed in a different room she should not have been present, but for the circumstance taking place while some machinery was mending.

"This witness has established the point," said one of the magistrates.

"By your leave, sir, I have a question or two to put, to her," said the overlooker, with a malignant leer, "Turn this way, ma'am, if you please."

She turned accordingly, and afforded a fuller view to Richard.

"Now be so good as to state in what relationship you stand to the family of this Mary Green."

"No relationship at all."

"Oh, you quibble at a word, do you? Well, then, barring relationship, how long have you lived with them, and on what terms?"

"I have lived with them ever since I lost my parents; that is, from my infancy; and my circumstances are those of being a dependent on their bounty."

"No, no!" exclaimed a tremulous voice, that went to Richard's heart; but the magistrate cried "Silence, there!" and all was still.

"And if they turned you out of doors, where could you go?"

Richard clenched his fist with a movement so sudden and violent that South, who had been watching him for some time, caught his arm, and whispered, "Be quiet."

"Where could you go, hey?" repeated the questioner, who had succeeded in momentarily confounding his victim by a supposition so new and so monstrous.

But Helen had a great stock of that innate dignity which belongs not to birth or station, but to character. She fixed a steady look upon him, and replied, "If by any dispensation of God I was deprived of my best and only friends on earth, I have still one to go to who has said, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.'"

"That is to say, I suppose, you would turn preacher."

Here a murmur of "shame!" was distinctly heard; and one of the gentlemen on the bench said, rather warmly,

"Enough of this; it will not shake the clear testimony of the young person before us. You may stand by, Helen Fleetwood; and now what witnesses have we for the defence?"

Helen, with a respectful curtsy to the bench, retired; but it was plain, by the flushing of her brow and struggling of her breath, that the acquired strength of the hour was passing away. Richard saw his grandmother press forward to meet and receive her; he saw the aged hands that had fondled his infancy stretched out to clasp those of its dearest companion; and as Helen's head sank on the shoulder of one to whose fond heart the bare suggestion of *turning her out of doors* had been a dagger, Richard burst away, and rushed out of the court.

It was too much like a feverish dream; and occurring after two sleepless nights of travel, it almost overset the boy's reason. He wandered on, careless where, until a name over a shop-door, similar to that of the gentleman to whom he was sent, recalled the primary object of his journey. Sick at heart, but still true to the principle of duty, he seated himself for a few minutes on a low post, recalling his message, and finding on inquiry that the person lived at the opposite end of the town from the poor abode of his own family, he bent his way thither, and delivered his packet. Orders were given him to wait and refresh himself in the kitchen while it was read; and afterwards he was told to call on the morrow for farther directions. This left him at liberty, and he lost not a moment in hurrying to what, since it contained all that he loved on earth, he already called his home.

Despite of all that combined to wring their hearts with sorrow, the meeting was most joyful. Apprized by James of his arrival, the delicious task of making preparations to receive him again had animated their bosoms and their looks. James was up, wrapped in a blanket, and seated on a low stool, supported on two sides by an angle of the room, and on the third by the crazy table. The widow, Helen, Mary, Katy, were bustling to no end, and Richard's basket had been plundered without scruple to aid in the preparations. The rush that met him at the door, the exclamations of welcome and of

joy, and of wonder too at his immense growth, and the caresses that even little Katy would bestow, by hugging and kissing one of his hands—all was so much a reality, that he seemed to forget the ugly dream, and laughed through his tears, and was the happiest of all.

What, indeed, is the best of this world's happiness, but a temporary forgetfulness of the trouble to which man is born as the sparks fly upwards!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FAMILY MEETING.

SCARCELY had the family party settled down into comparative composure, when South made his appearance. Convinced of Richard's identity by what he had seen in the court, he now came to offer him a bed in his house; saying, that as he knew the visit was unexpected, it would save them some trouble. Richard would have preferred lying on the bare boards under the same roof with those so dear to him; but a glance round the miserable room, which was too evidently their only apartment, convinced him of its impracticability. He therefore confirmed his grandmother's reluctant but grateful acceptance of the neighbourly offer. She was secretly unwilling that he should go to one whose family were far from what she wished, and who would also acquaint him with many things of which she desired him to be kept ignorant; but no other alternative presented itself, except that of turning him loose to seek a lodging where no young stranger was safe.

South did not stay long: his good feelings, always alive toward this family, overcame the temptation to stop. The highly respectable though rustic appearance of the young peasant had pleased him greatly; and he longed to show his goodwill as the world delights to show it; that is, by communicating intelligence nearly concerning those whom he best loved, of the most painful nature, and in a way calculated at once to rouse and to wound his feelings. Not that South loved

particularly to give pain, but he liked to produce a sensation, and to exhibit his acquaintance with other people's concerns. He lived in idleness, on the profits of his poor children's toil; and as he closed the early grave over the heads of successive victims, he quieted his conscience by keeping up a vehement and continued protest against the evils of which he availed himself. South spoke the truth; he did not exaggerate facts, but he very much weakened their effect on the minds of his hearers, by sharing the spoil. This rendered a new arrival the more welcome, because from a stranger he was less liable to the retort that those better acquainted with him frequently made.

When taking leave of the widow, he observed, "You must not be too much disheartened at that fellow's acquittal. I knew how it would be all along. The inspector is getting too sharp, and he must be checked, by showing him how little good his interference can do. As for all the spiteful things they said, and the lies they told for the defence, never heed them: it was only to prevent your getting redress, and so encouraging others to seek it. Well, Mr. Green, don't hurry from your friends to-night: come when you like—I shall be glad to see you."

The momentary dream of enjoyment was now dissipated; the painful reality forced back upon their view, and the effect was felt in a sort of restraint falling on the party. They sate, neither knowing how to break the silence, till Mary began—"So, then, your were in the court, Richard."

"Yes, I was, dear, I went immediately after leaving James."

"And did you—did you believe the things they said about us at the end?"

"I heard nothing of it: I came away directly after Helen was examined: but I saw there was a great deal of wickedness at work against you. Indeed, I went out because I could not stand it any longer without speaking my mind to them all; and I knew that must not be."

"You did right, my dear child," said the widow.

"But, granny, tell me two things. What has brought you so low in your circumstances; and why did you not let me and Mr. Barlow know it in time?" He

looked round the room, then in their altered faces, and tears filled his eyes.

"It would be a long story, Richard, but the story of hundreds upon hundreds whom you meet at every corner in these towns. We have not been dishonest nor idle. Helen, Mary, Willy, and Katy have worked constantly in the mills: James, even now that he is so weak, continues to make little articles for us to sell: and I"—her voice faltered, but she instantly recovered it, and in a firm, cheerful tone continued, "I have gone out with tapes and laces, and such like things, and sometimes get a day's employment at cleaning among the mills. So Richard, we are all, by God's mercy, to this hour, independent."

"But you seem to have so few comforts."

"That is owing to one or another being often ill, and coals and every thing so dear last winter. When we had the fever we got help from a loan fund, and have been paying it back. Indeed, only for bad health, we should be very well off, as times go; and that, you know, is what God sees fit to send us."

"Ah, but living in such a close, unwholesome place, how can you be well?"

"The rents are too high everywhere else; we staid as long as we could in an airy situation."

"And you never told me you were ill!"

"It would only have made you anxious, and perhaps have tempted you to come over and see us, and take the fever too. But now, my dear child, let us speak of God's mercies to our souls and bodies, and not talk as if we reproached Him who has been so very gracious to us."

"Tell him about father," said Katy.

The subject seemed to animate them all; each had something to tell: and from their united story it seemed that Malony had become more and more attached to the hearing of God's word; and the widow having one day met with an Irish reader, reasoning out of the scriptures with a poor countryman of his, she brought him to Malony, and to her great joy found that he received the word, in his own tongue, not only with gladness, but with the most cheering evidence of a true and saving faith. "It was wonderful," she continued, "how he caught at passages in the Bible, and retained them in his memory, and boasted upon them, I may say. The reader

only stopped two or three weeks in the place, but Malony laid up a store that lasted him to his dying breath."

"Please, sir," said Katy, "father did be saying the Bible to himself all day long. I know it was the Bible, because I read the same in English: and he would make me repeat to him what I heard at church: for father sent me to church too, sir."

"Ay," said James; "do you know, Richard, he would as soon have seen Katy's head off, as let her go to a Protestant church, till one day the priest scolded him for hearing the Bible, and forbade it him. So, directly, Malony, seeing our religion taught us to read the Bible, and his denied it, determined his child should have nothing more to do with Popery. You would not believe scarcely what a work there was when poor little Katy was seen going to church; and when, soon after, she took the fever, the priest told every body it was a judgment upon her for turning heretic, and that she would die and go to hell."

"But I did'nt die, sir," said Katy.

"So I see, my little lass," replied Richard, smiling; "and I hope you will long live to stand by your friends, as you did this morning."

Katy looked energetic, replying in a decided tone, "And I will sir, please God."

"The fever," resumed the widow, "by laying poor Katy up, deprived Malony of his sole means of support: he was already helpless, in the last stage of decline"—she paused, then added, "He died in this room, rejoicing in God his Saviour; a more triumphant death I never witnessed."

"It was you that did it," exclaimed Katy, suddenly rushing up to the old woman, and burying her face in her lap: "it was your own blessed self that did it all."

"No, my child, it was the Lord who did it."

"Ah, but he bid you do it, and you did. Sure, did'nt you bring poor father here, and nurse-tend him, and me too, when never the one of us could lift up head or hand to bless you? And did'nt you talk to him, and pray for him, when the heart of you was breaking with all of us sick, and give us the half of every sup of drink that was little enough for yourselves; and"—

"Well, well, Katy, whatever we were

"The means of doing for you, we are well supplied by the love you bear us, and far more by seeing you desirous to walk in the same way that has led your dear father to heaven. And what way is that, Mary?"

"Jesus Christ is the way, ma'am, and the truth, and the life."

The turn thus given to the conversation was further improved by the widow, Helen, and James, until Richard half forgot the sorrows of the road by which they were travelling in the brightness of the prospect before them. It was nothing new to hear his grandmother discourse of eternal realities until they seemed visible to herself and those around; but Helen astonished him by the quiet fervour of her spirit, and the earnestness with which she pressed on him the consideration of those things which she had formerly recommended indeed by her daily walk, but never spoken much about.

"You see, Richard," she remarked, "how little we really believe what God tells us; or if we do believe it, how little we desire what he says is best for us; even though the dearest of his people bear witness that they have found it so. God says, 'It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth;' and David testifies, 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted;' and Paul says, 'If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him;' and the angel says of those who are before the throne, with white robes, and palms of triumph, 'These are they that came out of great tribulation.' And yet, with all this before us, how little we like that either ourselves or those belonging to us should bear the yoke, or see affliction!"

"I cannot deny that, Helen: if we liked it, it would not be affliction: but there are troubles everywhere, and why not meet them where we have the comfort of dear friends to feel with us, and to encourage us? Must you come into such a dreadful place as this to look for misery?"

"We did not come here to seek misery," said the widow with a sigh, "and dear Richard knows that: but we have found it here, at least what you consider misery, and with such words to cheer us as our Helen has just quoted, surely we may bless the Lord for the portion he sees good to provide us with."

"We were too happy at L——," observed James.

"I don't know what you mean by being too happy," said Mary. "Your health was none of the best: we worked hard, and met with troubles enough. To be sure, we had fresh air and sunshine, and green grass to walk on, and flowers to look at, and decent people about us; and we could really walk about without being run against by drunken men, or hearing people curse and swear at every turn. No doubt, it is much better for us to be where we have none of these indulgences to spoil us; and where I can be beaten and kicked about, and get no redress; and where Helen may be set out in public for a drunkard and every thing that is bad."

"Mary! Mary!" cried the widow sorrowfully, "to hear you talk in such a way is a far worse trial than all the rest."

Richard was shocked: the expression of his sister's face had already struck him as being much altered for the worse; but the bitter scorn, the sarcastic levity that swelled in every feature while she uttered these remarks, bespoke a greater change than he was prepared for. The sorrow, too, depicted on the countenances of the rest was unmingled with surprise at what seemed so strange to him; and he felt that he must stifle his own regrets to avoid giving encouragement to what sounded too like the language of reproach against their best friend.

"Dearest granny," he said, "you must forgive Mary and me too, considering what we cannot help feeling when it was for us that you gave up every comfort, and left your home. We all know you could have staid, and have been better off than before, only for us. If you would have thrown us on the parish, you might have stocked a nice little shop with the money you had, and got rich by it: but you would not; you thought by giving up every thing that would have cheered your old age at home and coming yourself among strangers, and beginning, I may say, the world anew, when you should have been settling in a comfortable nest to end it in, you would have us all independent and prosperous. You could no more foresee what would happen here, than you could foresee the loss of our lease; God has ordered it as he saw best;

but don't blame us if we grieve at what you suffer for us;" and while he kissed the tear from her aged cheek, he added, "better days may come yet; for I'll turn the world upside down, but something shall be done to bring them round."

"You are more likely to turn your own head in the attempt," said Mary, "even if you use the best spade you have."

Her brother looked sternly at her, and she returned the look with one of sulky defiance: his oblique reproof had failed to reach her heart, and only wounded her pride. She had lately indulged in a habit of indirectly reproaching her grandmother for bringing them there, and Helen for having so long lived upon what, she hinted, would, if laid by, have sufficed to provide another home for them in L. Richard had completely silenced her on the former point, and she longed to take a double revenge on Helen.

For, alas! little Mary had gradually yielded to the corrupting influence around her, so far as to stifle the pleadings of a better voice within, and to give the reins to an angry temper which when let loose would spare none within its range. She had become a tyrant; and as tyrants are generally cowards, the most helpless was sure to feel its worst effects. She loved Richard; and she might have learned to regard him now with somewhat of salutary fear, but the shortness of his stay prevented such a feeling, while the delight of vindicating her conscious power to distress others even in his presence, deadened the sense not only of affection but of common humanity towards him, who must necessarily be made most unhappy by the discovery. So it is, that one evil passion allowed to prevail can overcome every thing good in the character, and spread like a devouring fire, destruction all around it.

James was the only person who possessed any real influence over her, and he, by reminding her how very soon she must see him confined, sometimes prevailed to calm a rising storm. He now asked her for drink, and while she held it to his lips, whispered, "Mary, I shall never see dear Richard again: for my sake let all be quiet and happy while he stays."

"Who wants to hinder it?" she mut-

tered: while her countenance lost some of its bad expression.

Soon after, Willy came in; Richard had asked many times when he would arrive; for he was the pet of his eldest brother, even more than of any one else; and ardently did the youth desire once more to behold "the little one," as he was called. Willy entered abruptly, and stood for a moment surprised to see a stranger seated at their poor table; but his brother flew to him, and lifting him in his arms exclaimed, "My own Willy! my little darling! how I have longed, and longed to look in your dear face again!"

The little boy, for he was not even nearly so much grown as Mary or James, stared at him in perplexity; not that he did not know him, but his head was confused, and he could not understand how Richard came there. On a sudden the latter turned pale, and set him down, but still holding him by the hand he resumed his seat, and placed Willy on his knee. At that moment he met a look of anxious observation from Helen, who, on catching his eye, hastily averted her own, but the glance, short as it was, betrayed too much—it told him her fears that he had detected in the breath of that child the noxious fumes of ardent spirits!

Poor Richard's misery seemed now complete. Of those whom he so fondly loved one was on the very brink of the grave, another evidently beginning to sink, and the remaining two straying in childhood from the paths of peace. His grandmother became almost an object of resentment, because, knowing as she must the state of those committed to her, she looked so calm, so resigned, almost happy. Little could Richard understand of her real feelings: she had struggled until at one time the apathy of despair came over that active spirit, and then it would indeed have wrung his heart to have seen her ghastly looks; and to have heard the tones of her altered voice: but out of this wretched frame she had been delivered by the instrumentality of Helen and James, and now the language of her soul was once more—"It is the Lord; let him do as seemeth him good." Yet at times the conflict within was dreadful, and self-reproach almost overcame her confidence

in God, who seemed to be giving her thus to eat of the fruit of her own way; while what had in reality been only an error in judgment, in yielding to a most artfully-concerted plan of deceit, assumed the aspect of wilful, presumptuous sin.

The evening wore away; the beloved Bible was once more opened, and again their voices rose together in prayer and praise; but though the words of their hymn were joyful, the tones breathed forth were sad, and tremulous from emotion, for even Mary was overcome by the recollection of past happy hours: as she stood leaning on her brother's shoulder, the better feelings of her nature resumed their sway, and the events that had occurred since their last parting seemed an uneasy dream that she longed to forget.

With a heavy heart Richard bestowed and received the reluctant "Good night," and soon found himself seated in the little close room that South called his parlour, where a bed had been made up for him, while a pot of porter, some bread and cheese, with two plates, and two tobacco pipes bespoke the design of his host to have some conversation with him before he retired to rest.

Apologies having been made for poor accommodation, and warm thanks returned for the kindness shown, they soon entered upon the topic of the morning's meeting. Richard never smoked, and South, in compliment to him, refrained.

"Well, now, Mr. Green, it was strange enough that you should chance to place yourself in the court just beside one who could explain so much of what was going on. I saw you were a stranger, but never suspected you to be of that family till you got so warm about your sister. Then, to be sure, I saw the likeness, and began to fancy you must be the brother they were always talking about."

"Indeed, Mr. South, I should have been sore puzzled by some of the things I heard, only for you."

"And what, may I ask, do you think of the business?"

"I think they have perverted judgment and wronged the fatherless, and robbed the poor, and oppressed the stranger;" replied Richard, making a strong effort to restrain his feelings.

"Ay, they have indeed. Did you hear what passed after you ran out?"

"No."

"It's just like them, bearing it without a complaint: but nothing could equal the villany practised. You heard the strong evidence of the little Irish girl, and the still clearer proof given by Helen; also the vile attempt to brow-beat them both, which succeeded so ill that we thought the case was established; however the other party brought up a swarm of rascally slaves to swear away the characters of your two girls, and to declare that no undue severity had been used to Mary. This, with the absence of two or three who had promised to give evidence for her, but who were kept away by easy methods, turned the balance; and the case was dismissed, with some remarks on the bad spirit of those who could get it up. I was glad you left; for your feelings would have been greatly wounded, especially with regard to that good girl Helen, who was grossly misrepresented. However, I hope you are come to rescue some at least of them from the mills?"

Richard shook his head.

"Never mind, you may do so by-and-by; and let me tell you, the very lowest employment you could find for them in the country would be better, even in point of respectability, than the best they can get here."

"How came they—how came Helen to provoke so much ill-will?" asked Richard.

"Through the envious spite of a girl whom I could say a good deal of, only that she's your cousin. Phæbe Wright hated her for being so different from herself, and began this persecution. She is lately gone off with a regiment of soldiers, and a happy riddance we have of her!"

"But that proves her to be herself a very bad person, and it ought at least to do away with the effect her ill-word might have before she was found out."

South looked at him compassionately. "You know little of the wickedness of such places if you think a bad person has not more partizans here than a good one. If the worst they ever said of Helen had been true, she would have suffered no ill-will, much less persecution for it: but because her whole conduct gives the lie to

her slanderers, and moreover sets them an example just the contrary to what they like to follow, she is hunted down for a hypocrite and false pretender."

"She is not," said Richard, sternly.

"Well, I know that; and so do they."

Here there was a pause. South presently resumed.

"It is an ungracious part to act; but you see I have taken an interest in your family ever since they came here; and as you may do something towards mending the condition of one, at least, I can't help telling you things unpleasant to hear. That little one—Willy—is in bad hands, for all what Mrs. Green thinks, and I wish you'd see to him." He then proceeded to tell him that Parkins, to whose care the boy was confided, took no concern in him; and that he feared he was not doing well.

Richard frankly told him he had reason to fear so too; and mentioned the discovery that he had made, adding, "only that I can't persuade myself it is possible."

"It is not only too possible, but a common thing among the poor children. Consider what a faint, exhausted state they must be in when coming out of those hot crowded rooms, where they have been confined so many hours, working away at the most fatiguing labour, that strains every muscle of the body without giving wholesome exercise to any: their stomachs qualmish with hunger, or with unwholesome food, made so by the filthy dust and woolly particles, that they cannot help sucking down with every breath: their minds made sickly by conversation as dirty as the place they inhabit; longing for refreshment, but too tired and lazy to seek it in the play natural to their years. I say, Green, consider all this, and then fancy the effect of a dram, warming, and righting, as it were, their uncomfortable stomachs, putting new life, not a real life, I grant you, into their whole bodies, and raising up their spirits into a frolicksome mood that they love to feel them in. Can you wonder that the halfpenny is hoarded, begged, ay, stolen, to get the smallest sup of such a luxury?"

Richard's blood mounted at the word "stolen," but he said nothing, and South proceeded.

"I am speaking of the present time, while 'tis yet summer; but now suppose

what it is to come out in the state I have described, and moreover melted with heat, as you will see they are if you look into one of the mills, into the chilling frost of a winter evening, without a rag of additional clothing, and probably knowing there is but a small share of a very poor fire, if any, for them at home; and little enough of bedding to cover their shivering limbs. Don't you see, the gin-shop is a temptation hardly to be resisted even by the careful father of a family, much less by the poor silly child that never troubles its head for a moment about consequences?"

"Nothing but the grace of God can restrain a body in such a case," observed Richard; "and that grace is as free to my poor little Willy as to the wisest of men, if he would but seek it."

This remark was out of South's line. He cut a piece of cheese, and then resumed, "Your speaking reminds me of what I was first saying. The person your grandmother trusts Willy to is a man reckoned very religious; so she thinks all must needs be right. I don't understand exactly what his notions are, but he seems to say that if a man is not kept from doing wrong by a miracle, nothing else will keep him from it. However, I advise you to see Parkins, and find what sort of a look-out he keeps over your little brother."

Richard willingly promised to do this; and South volunteered some farther information.

"I must say the conduct of your aunt Wright's family has been very unnatural; but how can you expect people to feel for their more distant relations who care nothing for their very nearest flesh and blood? I dare say you heard of Sarah?"

"Yes; they wrote me that she was much afflicted, and that God seemed to be opening her heart to receive the gospel; but lately they have not mentioned her."

"No; 'tis a wonder she still lives if such a state can be called living. Poor thing! her only comfort was in hearing about religion from Helen and the rest; but you may be sure such things could not be pleasant in a place where Miss Phoebe ruled, so they made the very falsehoods they themselves invented of your girls an excuse for not keeping up the ac-

quantance; and to gratify a wicked envious spite, they deprived the poor dying creature of the only thing that could lighten her sufferings. I am not a religious man myself, but I can respect it in others; and I should be sorry not to look forward to the consolations of religion on my death-bed. In these places the poor live like beasts of burden, and so they must be content to die."

Richard was inclined to ask him what death-bed consolations a man could expect from religion who took no thought about it during his years of life; but South gave him no time to speak. He entered upon the character of Charles Wright, describing him as the most culpable of all, because he had it in his power fully to contradict the gross untruths of his sister, and to check others younger than himself; "but here," he continued, "is the great evil: they grow up in the mills from childhood to manhood—that is, the very few among them who live to be men and women—and all the change of character they undergo is from bad to worse; from being learners of wickedness to being teachers of it. In other situations you may say of a foolish child, "He will know better when he's older," for children, as they grow up, look about them and see that good conduct brings credit and profit, while the contrary leads to disgrace and ruin; whereas, in these mills, the child sees nothing of the sort; those about him are all of one class, and they may lie, they may steal, they may drink, they may make themselves no better than the beasts of the earth, so long as they work out their hours of labour, keeping time with the machinery, and don't openly wrong their employer. Indeed, where there is so much wickedness its more for their comfort to be like the rest: any one trying to withstand bad example, and to set a good one, like you poor girl Helen, must expect that if she don't choose to blacken her mind they'll blacken her name. Such a rookery of crows can't bear a white dove among them."

"But surely, Mr. South," said Richard, who began to feel irritated, "surely there must be some people, out of the thousands you are talking about, not deserving the horrid character you give them. You

wouldn't wish me to think ϵ . my fellow-creatures devils?"

"Not I; its only the mill-people I speak of; and if you think me uncharitable, just ask yourself what you would most likely now be if you had been taken out of your bed every day at early morn, and shut up in a close, hot, dirty, unwholesome building, where you'd never have heard a syllable of good advice, but cursing and swearing, and filthy talk from morning to night: then to go home, so tired you had no thought for any thing but to get to sleep as fast as could be, and up again for the same purpose. This to go on from Monday morning to Saturday night, and Sunday the only play-day you had—the only day when you might, by taking a stroll, satisfy yourself that the world is not made entirely of brick and stone—the only—"

"Oh, say no more!" exclaimed Richard, burying his face in his hands. This appeal had reached his heart, and too well convinced him of what he dreaded to believe. The conviction flashed upon him of how much the scenes in which he had lived and acted had contributed to form his character. Take away the sunny landscape, the broad fields, carpeted with smiling flowers, the shady banks, the towering trees, the high open canopy of heaven, and the sea—the glorious sea, which with thundering lullaby had hushed him to rest, and whose majestic roar had blended with the skylark's morning salutation—take these away, and Richard could only regard the world as a dreary, joyless spot, compared with what he had found it. He also felt how infinitely more efficacious to his soul had been the pious precepts carefully instilled, because of their practical exemplification in the daily walk of his teachers; and with anguish unspeakable his thoughts reverted to Willy and Mary, as being actually, perhaps irrecoverably entangled in the snare so vividly depicted. South observed the conflict that flushed the youth's forehead, and oppressed his breathing; and sought a little to qualify what he had said.

"Mind, I don't deny that a well-instructed, virtuous child may even stand against all this, with the help of such a watchful friend at home as your young ones have;

but I wanted to prove to you that the wickedness of the factories is not to be charged on the poor labourers, so much as on the vile system that makes slaves, not servants, of them. Certainly things have been worse; but with every improvement they are still what I represent, as the scene I saw this morning may prove to you. There the inspector did all that the law allows; he searched out for cases of injustice, brought them to as fair a trial as he could obtain, and as it was impossible he should stop to superintend it, he placed the matter in most respectable, honourable hands, and gave every help in his power; yet you see the result; and I need not remind you how they baffled him, by intimidating one set of witnesses, brow-beating another, influencing a third, slandering a fourth, perplexing the silly children, quibbling about words, shifting the responsibility from party to party, as in the case of the surgeons' and magistrates' certificates, and finally making sure of a partial decision by putting a near relation on the bench. Self-interest, Green, is a strong feeling in man; and the laws are to be blamed that leave the mill-owners at liberty to go such lengths where it leads them. Many an honourable, kind-hearted man is drawn away insensibly to do, for his own interest, what he would never think of doing if the fact of its being allowed by the laws, and being done by his neighbours, did not make him look on it as a sort of thing of course—a necessary evil—an act of injustice done by so many that his refraining from it would only ruin himself, without taking any thing worth mentioning from the amount of public harm."

"Now that's the way I like to put it, Mr. South," said Richard. "I can't bear to throw the blame so heavily on my fellow-creatures; and I would rather it rested on the laws that are so bad."

"Yes, but the laws don't make themselves, you know; and we send up members to Parliament on purpose to make good laws for us, or to alter what are bad. This carries the blame beyond the mill-owners. They have, altogether, submitted very well to some alterations that bore hard upon them; and we can't expect them to throw away what they have always been in the habit of getting, unless obliged by law to do so. I'll tell you what,

Green," he added with a vehemence that surprised his hearer, "there are those among us that went such lengths as we ought not, to frighten the government into giving us a Reform Bill, because those that were to get into Parliament by it promised the redress of our heavy grievances; and we got it; and these men took their places in the House accordingly: but now, mind me, young one, while I say—ay, and I'll swear it on all the books that ever were printed—there never was a body of men brought together that thought so little of their pledges, or cared so little for the poor, or trifled so with the liberties that they had always in their mouths, as this reformed House of Commons. A boroughmongering Parliament passed old Sir Robert Peel's bill, which is the only real boon ever bestowed on the poor factory labourers; and a reformed Parliament, a reforming government, undid all the best clauses in that bill."

"I know no more of politics than the babe unborn," said Richard.

"Very likely; but the time is coming, when every man, woman, and child must know something of politics. They have given us cheap knowledge, because it is as cheap to them as to us; and because they thought if we saw a little farther we should be more willing to put our shoulder to their wheel, and help them forward; but we are looking beyond the point they marked out, and may show them yet that we are not to be bamboozled with fine names, when we want the things themselves that those names signify."

Richard was perplexed. A degree of excitement had taken place of South's quiet manner, generally dull and heavy, but always dissatisfied. He seemed to have thrown aside his reserve, and exhibited the restless impatience of a man who has something to divulge that he is not quite sure he may speak. He looked earnestly at the youth, and asked, "How long do you stay here?"

"Only four days."

South shook his head; "I fear you'll carry back a heavy heart in your bosom."

"So I must; I shall never be happy again, as I was before. May the Lord give me grace to cast my burden on him, for I know he can sustain it!"

"You are a good young man; but it's

all owing to the way and the place you were brought up in."

"I am not good, Mr. South. God knows how evil and rebellious a creature I am; and if I have been kept from some of the open sins that others run into, it is owing to his blessing on the good teaching I have had. Do you suppose there is no wickedness in the country, or that some who are carefully reared don't turn out badly at last? We must give the glory to God, and not to man."

"Well, I don't doubt your being right," said South, who had resumed his cautious manner, "but on your own principle you are bound to look after that little brother of yours, who is likely to lose what he has got."

Richard assured him that such was his intention; and resolving to investigate the matter on the following day, he went to his bed, weary and dejected, to ponder over the occurrences of the day. The sounds that reached him were far, oh! how far, unlike those to which his ear was accustomed; carriages rattling over the stones, the song of the drunkard as he reeled along, and the shout of the brawler as he provoked a fray, church bells chiming the hour, and drowsy watchmen proclaiming it, these and other unwonted notes kept him starting from the dreamy mood that after a while stole over his senses, until they too seemed to be lost in the confused murmur of distant billows; and gradually the scenes of his childhood reappeared in visionary beauty, with the forms he so fondly loved engaged in their accustomed rural occupations. Helen and Mary carried their milk-pail along the cliffs; but the sky darkened, the sea rolled in liquid mountains, and threatened to swallow up the coast. Richard must fly to snatch them from danger; and then followed all the wildly confused imagery of a feverish dream, from which he was awakened by the ringing of a bell, and jumped up to see the rain running down the panes of his window. A great stir was audible, and Richard concluded the factory labourers were summoned by that bell. He was dressed in a moment, and all his accustomed morning devotions being condensed as it were, in one passionate ejaculation for mercy and help, he rushed into the wet

misty, miserable street, in quest of those whom he had just been looking on through the medium of an exciting dream.

CHAPTER XVII.

MORE MISERIES.

RICHARD happened to take the right path, and in turning the corner of a street he suddenly met Helen with Mary hastening on. The contrast between those dark, miry, smoky, and now doubly comfortless thoroughfares and the bright cliffs of L— did not to his mind appear so striking or so sad as that between the figures before him and the images so long enshrined in his heart. They were scantily clad, and though the air of neatness that had ever distinguished them was still discernible, particularly in Helen, poverty had set a mark on them that could not be mistaken. The paleness of their cheeks and general emaciation were more visible than on the preceding day; perhaps still farther aggravated by the visions that had haunted Richard's pillow, where they came in the full freshness of their most prosperous days. He had time to observe their wan, dejected looks before the discovery of his approach brightened them into animation: and with a heart too full to speak, he drew a hand of each through his arm, and turned back with them. Looking down he was compelled to see how badly their feet were defended from the liquid mire of those filthy streets; and he felt as if the respectability of his own substantial clothing was a reproach to them.

"Well, Richard," said Mary, "this is not quite so pleasant as the road to old Buckle's cow-house."

"The weather would make any walk rather unpleasant just now," remarked Helen; "but the path of duty has a sunshine of its own that the clouds cannot darken."

"So you say; you always try to make out that black is white, and will think it a great virtue to cheat Richard into the notion that we are living in great plenty and

comfort. Look here," added the perverse girl, removing the end of her shawl from a tin jug, "that's all we have to eat, after working for hours in the mill, and with this wet cold walk to help our appetites."

"Mary," exclaimed Helen with a warmth quite unusual to her, "how can you be so cruel to distress your brother in that way, to no purpose?"

"What's the use of deceiving him, I should like to know?"

"None at all," said Richard, "but Helen always thinks more of others than herself."

Mary began, "If others had not thought"—but at that moment Katy ran up breathless, and by her eager exclamations of pleasure on seeing Richard, and overtaking her companions, interrupted a speech that would have sadly wounded one whom Mary was too much in the habit of obliquely reproaching, and exasperated her brother not a little.

They now approached the mill; the crowd of course thickening by the arrival of labourers from every quarter. Richard was an object of great attention, and the colour mounted to his cheeks as he met so many eyes fixed on him in the broad stare of unabashed freedom, or the leer of low cunning and vulgar ridicule, directed more against the girls than himself.

"Is that the lawyer wot you got to fight your battles yesterday?" asked a conceited-looking, dirty young fellow, in a tone of extreme familiarity.

"No," replied Mary, proudly, and quite audibly enough to be heard on all sides, "this is my brother."

"Indeed? a fine chap—I spose he's Nell's brother too," returned the other, grinning at Richard in a way that tempted him to inflict chastisement on one who seemed a suitable object for his undefined feeling of struggling resentment. But the clock struck, and in a moment he found himself, after a great deal of jostling, nearly alone at the entrance of the building.

There was something in this short scene that awakened a pang more bitter than he had yet known. Richard possessed a great share of that honest, manly self-respect which characterizes the Englishman in humble life, wherever his natural spirit is not ground down by the perpetual friction of oppression from above, and con-

taminating influences around him. It is a fine trait, when combined with modest respect for superiors, and frank goodwill towards equals; and it embraces, in the bosom of its possessor, not only himself but those who by birth, or other domestic ties, are identified with him. That any female belonging to his household should become mixed up in such a mass of human degradation as he had just seen assembled, that the two most especially claiming his jealous care should be daily exposed to the familiar impertinence and insulting jeers of such beings as the person who had just annoyed him, wounded alike his affection, his delicacy, and his independence. "I was reconciled," thought the youth, as he slowly left the spot, "I was reconciled to this parting chiefly because I was afraid they might be forced to mix with the lowest poor at home; and well I am punished for my pride! There's not a man, or a boy, on all our coast would speak in that manner to them, if they were working by the road-side. Nell, indeed! I wonder if she can—no, I'm certain sure she cannot like or encourage it. And then Mary; she's getting as brazen and unfeeling as can be. Oh, what has my grandmother done in bringing them here!"

Every step that he took increased his disgust: early as it was, the doors of gin-shops were already swinging on their hinges, and many a ghastly, repulsive-looking being issued forth, having preferred the morning dram to a loaf of bread. Among them were some so young, that he shuddered when recalling what South had said in reference to Willy. Towards home he strolled, rather than walked, regardless of the way he took, lost in painful thought; and when arrived he found the widow absent, and no one there but James, who lay in a deep heavy slumber, his bible above his head on the pillow, and his arm thrown around it. Richard softly seated himself on the bed's edge, and as he hung over the sleeping boy, and gazed on the countenance so beautiful in its death-like expression, the tide of accumulated sorrows broke forth in tears, which fell fast and unrestrained over his unconscious brother.

When James awoke, and stretched out his arm, without opening his eyes, Richard gently touched the burning hand.

"Dear granny," murmured the boy "did you get any thing for it? would they take it? I hope"—and unclosing his lids, he stopped short on seeing Richard, to whom his words had conveyed a new and grievous sensation, but which he thought it best to conceal. "What were you saying, darling Jem? you spoke so low—were you asking for granny? I think she is out."

The boy seemed relieved, hoping that his words had not been understood; then inquired how his brother had slept.

"As well as I expected: Mr. South is very kind."

"Yes; God gives us what we want, when we want it. A good lodging for you was a great comfort to us all. But, Richard, don't hang over me, so; my breath is not good for you, particularly fasting."

Richard bent his head still lower, and with a fresh gush of tears said, "I take it the more willingly, Jem, because there is death in it. What have I to live for?"

"A great deal, I hope. The Lord is trying us all in a furnace of affliction; you will be made fitter to serve him for some time on earth, and I hope I am going very soon to serve him in heaven."

"And why may not I wish to go soon as well as you?"

"Because I cannot recover, and my removal will take a burden off the hands of poor granny; but you are healthy and strong, and may be a help and support to her and the rest. They all want you, particularly Willy, for he minds nobody now, and you may do him good."

"I am going to-day to see about him at the mill, and inquire of this Mr. Parkins."

"Do; Mr. Parkins is a good man, but I don't think he looks after Willy. He seems to say that when God pleases to bestow the gift of repentance and faith, all will go right; but till then all must take its own way, and we have nothing to do but to wait."

"And to work and to watch," added Richard.

"So I think: but you had better speak to him yourself. Granny does not seem to see what Helen and I cannot help noticing; indeed, she was not by when Mr. Parkins had a long talk with us about Malony; but since we saw poor little

Willy so changed for the worse, we could not help being reminded of his opinions."

"Mary is changed for the worse too."

"Ah, Richard! if it was not for Helen I should say that the mills are made of pitch—that nobody could touch them and not be defiled; but you never saw such a creature as Helen. She seems to me," added the boy raising himself from the pillow, and speaking with energy, "She seems to me to be sent just to show us that there is no situation where the grace of God is not sufficient for his children, if they do but seek it always. Mary won't seek it, I fear, nor Willy, and so they are getting into many bad ways. As for that poor little thing Katy, she has a natural contentedness about her; a quiet, thankful, obedient child; and so attentive to what is good, that I do hope she is profiting by it. But you never saw such trials as Helen has had to go through. Not only the spite against her, bred by that cruel Phoebe, and kept up for a long time, though it is not nearly so bad now, but sufferings in her health that she never confessed to any body but me, swellings in her ancles, pains in the chest, giddiness in the head, and fits of low spirits that she used at first to think was the hiding of God's face from her, and that thought made it worse: but in the midst of one of these sad seasons she heard a beautiful sermon on the text, 'My heart and my flesh faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.' The preacher showed how the failing of bodily health would cause the mind to droop and be dark; and how, though the sunshine of gladness might be withdrawn, the bright soft moonlight of quiet faith, and sure trust in Him who cannot deny himself, would lead the traveller on in the safe, right path, till the sun rose again, either through the return of health and cheerfulness, or in the bright morning of the resurrection. Helen told me all; and laughed and cried, and said, 'How could I ever doubt!' and since that, if I notice that she looks ill or dejected, she smiles and says, 'It is moonlight still.' And truly she has been like the moonlight to us through many a dark night."

The poor boy sunk back, exhausted by the earnestness with which he had spoken;

and Richard, in a low voice asked, "Is Mary as kind to Helen as she ought to be?"

"Far from it," replied James sorrowfully. "Poor Mary seems to be drawing back, and as Helen always goes forward, it seems as if she was forced to keep comparing herself, and so to see how the distance between them increases. Mary cannot make Helen go wrong: but she seems to try to persuade herself that she does; and she picks up expressions that go to make out a charge of hypocrisy against Helen, which pains her greatly, because it prevents her good advice from having the effect it ought to have."

"I thought," said Richard, striving to speak with great composure, "that Mary spoke this morning as if she could have reproached Helen—with—" he seemed at a loss for words.

"If it was with what granny has done for her," exclaimed James, reddening, "then Mary is a most wicked girl; for we found out her being in the habit of doing so, and got her promise, her solemn promise, never to be guilty of it again. Indeed, I have lately not liked the way Helen put me off, when I questioned her about Mary's conduct to her. Oh, if it be so, what a cruel, cruel persecution she must feel it."

"Does not Helen earn more towards supporting the family than Mary?"

"A great deal: and besides that she often works at night, and makes many small things such as I used to do before I became too weak, for granny to sell."

"And could the rest of you get enough to live on, if Helen and her earnings were both away?"

"No," replied James, opening wide his brilliant eyes, and fixing them on his brother, as if an agreeable thought had been for the first time suggested to him: "one-half of Katy's earnings is carefully put by for her, that she may not be destitute if any thing happens to granny; and for better security it is paid into the clergyman's hands every week, lest poverty might tempt us to touch it. An Irishwoman who is a very bigoted Papist, offered to keep Katy for that sum; and though we are sure she could not have fed the child on it, and also that real kind feeling made her propose it, yet as it was Malony's dying

request that his little girl might be brought up a Protestant, granny and Helen agreed they would do the same, that it might be seen we did not keep her for the profit of her labour. She costs more, but Helen's industry makes it up."

"Oh, well, the next time Miss Mary gives her tongue any liberty to hurt Helen, you'll just know how to stop her."

James did not like the expression of his brother's features as he said this: his tender spirit shrank from severity, even towards an offender; but the widow's entrance prevented his breathing the deprecatory expressions that rose to his lip.

"My dear, dear granny, how wet you are!" cried Richard, as he hastened to untie the dripping bonnet of the old woman. "Now do take off these soaked things, and make yourself dry and comfortable."

Alas! a sufficient change of raiment was no longer at the disposal of the trembling being to whom he spoke. She had been pawning her Sunday gown to procure him a breakfast that would prevent his discovering the wretchedness of the fare to which they were reduced until Saturday should bring in the week's wages of the young labourers. She now put down her purchases, evading Richard's remonstrances on the state of her garments, by telling him that breakfast would do her more good than dry clothes. To this James assented, adding that he was hungry too, and the other, with many painful misgivings, was forced to acquiesce. He announced his intention of visiting Willy's mill, and that the business on which he came would prevent his being home to dinner; but added that in the evening he hoped to enjoy some happy hours with them all.

A change had come over Richard's feelings that appeared to re-cast his whole character in a different mould. Its latent energy had rarely been roused into any strong manifestation; he had shown himself the docile, industrious boy, the steady, honest, independent youth, but always quiet and retiring, looking up to others, particularly to his aged relative, for guidance and encouragement: he now saw his situation and duties in a new light, and at once, almost unconsciously, assumed the headship of the family, feeling

his respectability bound up in them, no less than his happiness, and resolved to place them in a different position, both with regard to the world and to each other. How to effect it he had not inquired: but rescue them he would from the low station to which they seemed to have fallen; Mary must be subdued, Willy reclaimed, and the happy harmony of former days re-established.

This dream of coming conquest lent additional height to Richard's well-grown person, and to his elastic tread as he crossed the room to take his hat from the remembered box. The poor widow gazed upon him with looks of admiration, and exclaimed, "Blessings on our dear, good pastor, who persuaded me to leave my precious boy in the country! Ah, Richard, if you grow in wisdom as in stature, and in favour with God, who looketh not upon the outward appearance, but on the heart, happy are you. It is like sunshine to me to look on you, my child."

"Like the real sunshine," added James smiling, "that used to look in on us through the woodbine at home; not the shadow of sunshine that contrives to scramble down upon us here, through smoke and mist."

"Please God you shall see it again, dancing on the little blue waves, and making the wet sands sparkle like bright gold," said Richard.

"No," replied James, averting his face to hide the tears of fond remembrance that filled his eyes at this picture, "No, Richard: in the place that I am going to there is no more sea."

A fond farewell was now exchanged, and the young man sallied forth, first waiting on the gentleman to whom he had brought the letters, and who detained him so long that before he could reach Willy's factory the dinner-hour had arrived, and the labourers were dispersed, at their meals. Parkins' house, however, was very near, and thither he went, expecting to find his little brother, who had permission always to eat his dinner there. In this he was disappointed: Willy was not forthcoming, but Parkins received him very kindly.

After answering a few civil enquiries, Richard opened the business by asking how Willy went on. Parkins replied that

he had no particular fault to find with him—he was like the rest of his class and age, occupied with trifles, and bent on amusement when not confined to his work.

"Of course, sir: but I trust you keep a good watch over him, to prevent his going wrong."

"All who do not go right must go wrong," answered Parkins; "and I need not tell you your young brother has not yet been brought into the straight and narrow way."

"He has been taught to seek it, though," said Richard.

"He cannot discern it," persisted the other, "unless it be revealed to him of God. Man's teaching is vain: the best service we can render is to pray continually on his behalf to Him who alone can guide the wanderer into the fold."

"Then we must wait for a miracle," remarked Richard, bluntly.

"By no means: we set before him the truth, and commend it to him with every persuasive word: and so, using the means, we leave the event to God."

"And don't you correct what is wrong, and enforce what is right?"

"All is wrong and nothing is right until the person becomes a new creature; for 'who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.' Again, all is right and nothing is wrong when the change has taken place; for 'He hath not seen iniquity in Jacob, nor beheld perverseness in Israel.' Do you not perceive, my young friend, that nothing can be acceptable to God until we be brought to believe; for, 'Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.'"

Richard paused; he saw something incorrect in this deduction, but the premises he knew to be just, because they were scriptural. With natural frankness, he answered, "I partly agree with you, sir, and partly I don't. I am a plain country labourer, used to farming; and I find a great deal of instruction in observing the things that I am employed in. God has given a gracious promise that as long as the world endures, seed-time and harvest shall not fail: but seed-time would yield no harvest if we did not sow the seed in its time."

"Right; don't I tell you we do so, by stating the truths of the gospel?"

"Ay, sir, there we agree: but God has made two other things so necessary to the harvest, that all our sowing would not bring it about if they were neglected. First, we must break up the ground, turning up the weeds that naturally cover it thick and deep; and then, sir, we must fence it off. It would not do to dig and prepare a bit of ground in the middle of a common thoroughfare, and sow the seed there, leaving every hoof to trample it, and every stray fowl to gobble it up. It seems to me that the harvest is not a miracle worked in spite of us, but a merciful gift bestowed where we honestly labour for it."

"You surprise me, young man: you seem to make the growth of religion in the soul a work of the creature, not of the Creator."

"No, sir; all the creatures that ever lived could not make one grain of wheat to take root downwards or to spring upwards. That is the Lord's doing only: but since he has been pleased to make use of the figure of a field, and sowing, and reaping, and harvesting, in so many parts of his blessed word, I could not do less than take notice as I went along of the way in which it holds good. Perhaps," added Richard, smiling, "perhaps you that live among machinery, and see every thing done by steam, may take different views."

The last remark, though made in perfect simplicity, and intended as somewhat apologetic, was not relished by Parkins: he doubted whether he had not a rustic wag to deal with, and resolved to be circumspect: but before he could frame another observation, Willy entered, without seeing his brother, who was seated behind the door. Parkins enquired where he had been.

"No where at all," answered the boy, pertly.

"That's impossible: you must have been somewhere."

"May be so," returned the other, whose manner evidently showed that to be so questioned was no less strange than disagreeable to him.

Richard leaned forward, and grasping his arm, drew him to his knee, while the boy's fist, uplifted in self-defence, fell paralyzed on seeing who his captor was. Doubly excited by what he considered a

gross breach of trust on the one part, and by its too evident effects on the other, he spoke with unwonted force and decision, and with a stern look, no less indignant than animated. "Willy, I could not have believed, if another person had told me, what I have seen and heard this minute. You have been brought up in the ways of godliness, and taught that your duty before God is, next to himself, to honor those placed in authority over you. You have been bred and treated like a little lamb of the Lord's fold, and often have you been told of the roaring lion that goeth about seeking whom he may devour. You have been shown the promise that your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, and full well you know that without his help you can do nothing. Now answer me, how long ago is it since you last prayed from your own heart for that great gift?"

The boy trembled, and was silent.

"Was it to-day, Willy?" No answer.

"Was it yesterday, or was it last week?"

After a long silence, during which his brother still held him by the arm, and looked steadfastly in his face, he muttered, "I don't know when it was."

"So I feared: and now Willy, who is to keep you from evil, who is to watch over your steps, and save you from the paths that lead down to hell? Who is to preserve you from the snares of lying, evil-speaking, swearing, stealing, drinking?" His voice faltered at the last word, and the hand which had roughly held the child's arm, gradually relaxing, now pressed him to the honest bosom that yearned over his helplessness. Willy looked up in his face, and bursting into tears, said, "I will do any thing that you bid me, Richard?"

"I can't bid you do any thing," answered Richard, laying his forehead on Willy's shoulder to hide the tears that he too was shedding, "for my duty keeps me at a distance from you—and, oh, what a sad story I shall have to carry back to your dear teacher, our best friend, good, kind, Mr. Barlow!"

"Tell him I will be a good boy," sobbed Willy.

"But will you really strive to be so?"

Here Parkins interposed; "Mr. Green,

don't delude the child into any notion of his own goodness; he cannot be good unless he believes in the Lord Jesus Christ."

"I do believe in him," said Willy.

"If you did you would be a new creature."

"My farming," said Richard, who having imprinted the kiss of forgiveness on Willy's tearful cheek now felt his heart lightened again, "my farming, Mr. Parkins, has reminded me often of our Lord's saying—'First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear;' and I have learned something when stepping carefully to avoid trampling down the tender blade, though it was much unlike a full ripe ear.—The bell rang, and Parkins took down his hat. Willy clasped his arms round his brother's neck, and earnestly whispered—"I will pray to the Lord to make me a clean heart." Then running to Parkins, he said, "I beg your pardon, sir, for being so rude and disrespectful: but as I had been after no good I didn't like to be questioned." Parkins kindly shook his hand, and said he was glad to see him sensible of his fault: then asked Richard if he would like to see the mill, as he could get him leave of admittance.

Richard declined for the present to enter the building; for he really feared to expose himself to more of Parkins' discouraging remarks just then. However, he stood for a while under the archway of the gate, through which the children were pouring in. Their extreme youth shocked him no less than their squalid appearance. "I wonder how any doctor could find in his heart to give a certificate to such a poor, feeble, sickly-looking babe of a creature as that," said he, pointing out a little girl.

"No medical certificates are required in the silk-mills," answered Parkins.

"And are there many of them?"

"Not here; but in other towns an immense number."

"And do they take them in everywhere as young as that?"

"Much younger; I have seen many in different silk-mills not nearly so big as the smallest you could point to here."

"How long do they work?"

"As much as ten hours a day, often."

"But then you reckon the time given them for meals?"

"No; I speak only of the time allowed for labour."

"Ten hours!" exclaimed Richard, looking at a group of small children; "ten hours for such little weak things as those—why, its more than an honest man would expect from the biggest labourer; and to my mind its a disgrace to a Christian land to work the life-blood out of little children in this way."

"Hush, hush," interrupted Parkins, "you speak too loud."

"Is my little brother overworked, sir?"

"No, really I think not; he is not in a laborious department, and though often fatigued, as all must be more or less by a full day's employment, he is not more so than he would be by taking his fill of play in the streets."

"True enough," remarked Richard.

"Boys tire themselves with sport if they are left to take their fill of it." He looked round him, but though many a little countenance was turned towards him in childish curiosity, he met nothing of the free, laughing, or innocently-sheepish expression that he was accustomed to trace among the villagers. He felt no wish to remain longer, and thanking Parkins for his civility, expressed a hope that he would be watchful over Willy.

"Certainly; I was glad to see your remarks produced some effect on him. Remember, however, that the strong man armed will keep his goods in peace till a stronger than he or than us comes upon him. I would caution you against hoping too much from what man can do."

"Thank you; I hope God has also cautioned me against presuming too much, and so neglecting the means of doing good. I cannot deliver my brother, Mr. Parkins, it is true; but I can see to it that his blood does not lie at my door. Good bye, sir;" and he left the mill.

Having eaten a piece of coarse bread, in order to say that he had dined, Richard proceeded to make some purchases of tea and other little comforts for the party at home, bitterly regretting that he had not brought a hamper of provisions from L. Painful doubts crossed his mind as to the extent of suffering endured by his family,

but he strove to disbelieve what it was so grievous to contemplate. While strolling along, he met with South, who invited him to go and sit down in a public-house; but Richard pleaded his promise given to Mr. Barlow, that unless in a case of actual necessity he would not enter a place where drinking was habitually carried on.

"Well, then, we can walk together," said South; "I wonder how long it will be before our parsons take so much trouble to keep their young men out of harm's way."

"There are too many for them to look after," observed Richard.

"Ay, that's one of the blessings of an over-populous place. Not that it signifies much; for the quiet way in which the clergy look on while the poor are destroyed around them, shows how little they care about them, bodies or souls." Then, after a pause, he added, "To be sure they can do nothing except in the pulpit; and it would be an easier matter to preach all the mill-owners out of church than to preach one unjust and cruel principle out of the factory system. Do you remember, Green, the case tried yesterday, where children were overworked, and without school certificates?"

"Yes, I do,"

"Well, this morning, I happened to be in the office of that very firm, and heard most strict orders given to shut the door in the superintendent's face whenever he came there: never, on any pretence, to let him enter that mill again."

"But surely he can insist upon it."

"No; the inspector can, but not the superintendent, and considering how seldom he comes, how short his stay must be, and how many ways there are of baffling his inquiries, there is little fear of his giving any trouble, except where the superintendent has been before him to direct his notice; so you see that for the small sum of five shillings in which the parties were fined, they have purchased a security against all future molestation; this prosecution giving an excuse for excluding the troublesome investigators."

"Why this looks like a mockery of protection," said Richard.

"So it is; and to make the matter worse, the poor children who were the cause of it are turned out to starve."

"I only wish they may turn out Mary and Helen," remarked Richard.

"You had better wish no such thing; work is rather slack now; and depend upon it they would be kept out of employment for a long while, having appeared as complainants in open court. It is well they failed. Have you been to Parkins?"

"Yes, and near the silk-mill, where they are working babes as I would not work a plough-horse."

"Nice infant schools, arn't they? and if you could hear some of the lessons taught and learned by creatures no higher than your knee, you would know more of the value of the factory system."

"I could not hate it more than I do," said Richard.

"Yes, you would; a religious young man like you, believing that the wicked shall be turned into hell, would be terribly shocked at seeing the whole process of making young sinners ready for perdition in the next world, while hurrying them out of this."

Richard made no answer; the irritability of his feeling increased, and he had learned to watch against the rising storm, and to keep silence when disposed to speak intemperately. Besides, South was not one to whom he could unburden his mind. That person's information was evidently correct, and his remarks just; but they were uttered in a bad spirit. South was himself a specimen of the fruit produced by this evil tree. His health was injured by personal labour, yet not so much but that he might have turned to good account the remaining energies of the body wherein dwelt an acute and vigorous mind; but that mind had been perverted, rendered at once morbidly sensitive as to theory, and selfishly callous as to practice, in the matter that incessantly occupied it. He passed his time in denouncing the factory-system, and even built upon it doctrines subversive of every good principle as a British subject; but at the same time he purchased the leisure thus misapplied at the price of abandoning all his children to the horrors he so forcibly pictured and so eloquently deplored. This conscious inconsistency added gall to his bitterness, and while it led many right-minded persons to stand aloof from him, it increased his influence among a party who valued their leaders

according to their power of exciting the angry passions.

Richard was not sorry to part from his companion at the next turning, and hastened to the house so overclouded with sadness to his affectionate spirit.

During the evening, while enjoying a temporary forgetfulness of present distresses in the delightful retrospection of former times, the little party was disturbed by the abrupt entrance of a person who seemed welcome to none, and whose presence excited an emotion of angry surprise in Richard's bosom, when he recognized the conceited-looking little man who had addressed Mary in the morning with so offensively familiar an allusion to Helen. He never raised his hat from its studied position on one side of his head, but lounging in with an awkward shuffle, threw himself into a chair, stretched out his legs, and with a patronizing nod asked, "How are you all?"

The widow's distressed look, James' trepidation, and Helen's flush of evident displeasure, added to his own hostile sensations, tempted Richard to assume a very authoritative air, as he surveyed the intruder, who looked up at him with an expression of curiosity mingled with contempt, saying, "So this, I suppose, is the renowned Richard, of whom we have heard so much; a tall feller enough. How old may he be?"

This roused the young countryman completely. He sprang to his feet, but was arrested and confounded by hearing the other resume,—“Well, grandmother, I came by mother's desire to tell you how sorry she is —”

The widow hastily interrupted him,—“'Tis of no consequence, Charles; pray tell her not to think of it.”

“Oh, we know better. It must be of some consequence to you to have a strapping chap like that come upon you with a country appetite, and nothing for him to eat. Mother would lend you the half-crown if she could spare it just now, but she's some bargains to make. However, he added pompously, “I b'lieve I can let you have a shilling without much inconvenience,” and he drew out a tawdry purse, whistling the while.

“I do not want it,” said the widow

warmly, “I thank you, but really don't want it.”

“O nonsense! you would'nt have come out so late at night to borrow it, if you hadn't wanted it. Besides, I think I'll make you a present of it, for the sake of those pretty rogues,” looking at the girls, as he laid down the piece of money before the widow, and again nodding, bustled out.

Richard could not stand this; he seized the money, and was about to hurl it after the insulting donor, when Helen caught his arm, and Katy, nimbly jumping on a chair, snatched it suddenly from him, and darted out at the door, before any one could speak.

Richard turned, and fixing on the agitated widow a look of almost angry reproach, exclaimed, “Oh, granny, how could you, how could you expose us to this!”

“It was to her own daughter she went,” said James, “and how could granny suppose she would be so cruel as to publish it to that malicious Charles?”

“Granny could expect no better,” observed Mary, “from all she knew of aunt Wright; but beggars musn't be choosers.”

“Beggars!” repeated Richard.

“If Katy is gone to lay it out for us, —” commenced James, who seemed roused beyond his strength, but Mary interrupted him, “Never fear; she has a spirit worth two of that; she's more likely to throw it in his face.”

The little girl re-entered, glowing and panting, her eyes sparkling with satisfaction, while Richard eagerly exclaimed, “Well, Katy, did you overtake him?”

“Sure and I did, sir; and I caught him by the coat-tail, and there being plenty of people to the face, I said, Mr. Charles, said I, here's a shilling for you. What do I want with it, you little Irish black-guard, says he. Sure, an't you heartily welcome to it then, says I; and I dropped it right into his coat-pocket, and ran away through the people, and they laughing. Och, but its mad he was!”

“Served him right,” said James, “If he had done it with a kind feeling, we ought to have overlooked the manner of it; but he came to insult our poverty, and expose us before Richard.”

"Yes," said his brother bitterly, "Richard is a stranger now, it seems, and must be kept in the dark as to your concerns, unless others choose to inform him of them. Oh, I did not expect this!" He laid his head on his arms, and trembled with the mental agony that overpowered him.

None had courage to speak. They felt that any farther attempt at concealment was vain, but to pierce that loving heart with the tale of their deep distresses was a task that none could undertake. At this juncture Willy, who always came in later than the rest, entered; and seeing his brother in such evident distress, ran to him, folding his arms round his neck, and exclaiming,

"Richard, I will be good, indeed I will, and never grieve you any more. Oh," he continued, seeing tears escape over the coat sleeve, "Oh, how sorry I am to have made you unhappy! Won't you speak to me, Richard, your own poor little Willy that you used to love so dearly?"

Richard clasped him to his bosom, and for some moments all wept in silence together.

Mary first spoke: "It's no use keeping up any pretence now, granny; so let him know all. He won't love us the less, and perhaps some of us may be the better for a little humbling."

"All of us," I hope, said James.

"No; the rest of you don't need it. I meant myself, for you are none of you proud and hard-hearted like me."

"Mary," said Richard, drawing her to him, "it almost consoles me for all that can happen to hear you speak so."

With these softening circumstances to stay the rough wind in the day of the east wind, Richard listened quietly to the sad tale of disasters and privations which, but for the spiteful proceeding of Charles Wright, would have been withheld from him. Still there was a partial concealment: past, rather than present difficulties found the subject of what was told: and he was left to conclude that no farther pressure of actual want was likely to fall upon the objects of his fond and anxious sympathy.

CHAPTER XVIII.

EFFORTS FOR RELIEF.

WHEN, on the following day, Richard Green repaired to the gentleman on whose business he came, the latter, struck by the dejection of his countenance, inquired whether he was ill. Richard answered, that he was better in body than in mind: and on being kindly encouraged, owned that he had suffered a grievous disappointment in finding that the factory labour, for which his family had given up the healthful employments of the country, was so very different a thing from what they expected to find it. Of pecuniary distress he said nothing; but expatiated on the ruinous severity of the toil, and the demoralizing tendency of their habits. To all this his hearer most feelingly assented, and told him that he was busily engaged in forwarding the objects of those who sought to obtain legislatorial redress for the crying evils so generally felt. This was a joyful surprise to poor Richard, and with eager delight he accepted a ticket that was to admit him to a select meeting of the labourers, about to assemble for the consideration and adoption of future plans. "So, then," thought Richard, as he left the house with a lighter heart than he had felt for two days, "so, then, after all, there is some good stirring. I wonder why South did not tell me of this."

Full of anxious expectation, he repaired to the place of meeting; and found about twenty men assembled, principally of the appearance of artizans, but with one or two from a higher class in society. An air of seriousness pervaded the assemblage, and the general aspect of the men bespoke the quiet determination that is not soon turned from its purpose. Several bore the marks of bodily injury sustained in the factories, some were much stunted in growth, and there was not one among them who would in the country have been called a healthy-looking person. They were earnest but calm, and the curiosity that Richard's appearance evidently gave rise to was unmingled with rudeness or suspicion.

A well-dressed respectable-looking man, seated at a table, with a pile of papers before him, invited the stranger to approach,

and after looking at his ticket, observed, "You got this from our good friend Mr. H., and that is sufficient introduction; but perhaps you will be kind enough to tell us what led you to join us; you don't look like one who has been in the mills."

Richard felt a little abashed, but summoning resolution, replied, "True, sir, I never wrought in a factory; my labour, through God's mercy, has been in the country; but those that are dearer to me than my life are in the mills, and suffering enough to make me feel it more than if it was myself."

"Surely," said one of the men, "I saw you in the court, taking a great interest in the case of poor little Mary Green."

"Well I might," answered Richard, casting down his eyes as the recollection overcame him.

"Are you related to her?"

"I am her brother."

A dwarfish, but most intelligent-looking man now held out his hand, saying, "Mr. Green, I honour you and every member of your family, for the part you have acted by that precious girl Helen Fleetwood. If ever there was a persecuted Christian enabled by well-doing to put to silence the ignorance of the foolish, and to shame them of the contrary part, she is such a one."

Richard grasped the friendly hand as though it had been the richest of earth's treasures; but emotion kept him silent.

"Now," said the president, "I proceed to read the last letters from our deputation in London, that we may determine what steps to take next."

The document that he unfolded was long, and very interesting. It stated that the writer had been closely examined before the Committee of the House of Commons; that every important fact had been fairly elicited by the chairman and other friends to the cause, while all possible pains were taken by some on the other side to draw from him a contradiction of some part of his testimony, or to put a different aspect on the truths stated. He had afterwards been present in the gallery to hear a debate on the subject, where, he said, several of their friends spoke out with great force and feeling. They were met by hot and angry speeches on the part of some whom he named; cool denial from

others; and one gentleman had ventured upon such a misrepresentation of the whole concern as would not be believed in that or any other factory town to have passed the lips of a person so well acquainted with the case. "Generally," he wrote, "the matter was not taken up by such members as were personally most interested in it, but by others, who seemed to have got a completely wrong notion of the whole thing instilled into them. The worst part of the case was, the very great indifference shown by the House; many went out as soon as the subject was started; some folded their arms and fell asleep; others kept up conversations, often rising loud enough to drown the voices of the speakers; while pamphlets and newspapers were being handed about, and consultations held on all sorts of subjects. Lord Ashley——"

Here a general murmur of voices, rising at last to a hearty cheer, interrupted the reader: he paused till the burst of feeling had its way, then said, "God bless him!" "Amen," was the unanimous response, and he resumed.

"Lord Ashley, though he seemed grieved and hurt at all this, was neither daunted nor discouraged. He got up and gave them a lesson, both on our claims and their duties that will not soon be forgotten by any honest man who heard it. It did me good to look at him, and to think how much better than all the rank and all the wealth in the world is the blessing that belongs to him, pleading as he does the cause of the poor, and persevering in striving that those who are in need and necessity have right. Ay, striving against such difficulties as nobody can estimate or understand without seeing it. We used to think that what thwarts him is a hot opposition in the House of Commons. No such thing; it is like pleading with the deaf or preaching to the dead. Give him an adversary, and he can grapple with him; but who can grapple with a painted picture of a man that stares out of a frame without having either senses, or substance, or reality of any sort? This is just what the gentlemen become when our case is brought forward. Mr. O'Connell ——"

Here another interruption took place, of a character remarkably dissimilar from the former. The reader smiled, and resumed,

"Mr. O'Connell took vast pains not to hear what was said. He had a roll of papers in his hand, and untied them for the benefit of some red whiskered gentleman near him. Whether they were money drafts or instructions I don't know, but I know what I thought of when I looked from Lord Ashley to him, and back again to Lord Ashley."

The writer went on to state some of the misrepresentations that had been made, requesting to have a person sent up who could, on oath, from his own knowledge, disprove them.

"Here," said the president, folding the letter, "is our difficulty; we cannot rouse a manly feeling in the legislature on behalf of the oppressed children of poverty. If the lukewarm, indifferent people were away, and the battle to be fairly fought between those who are in earnest, we should soon see a good result; but this indifference leaves men so open to the arts of interested individuals, who, if they cannot give them a false view of the matter, so as to make them active opponents, easily persuade them it is a thing of no consequence, a mere waste of public time, the whim of a few sentimental dreamers. The liberal party, and more particularly those at the head of affairs, who could carry it at once if they chose, are liberal enough of fair words, but deeds we seek in vain; and the great liberator has sold us, almost in the open market, into a renewed, and for aught he cares, a perpetual period of hopeless bondage. We cannot change the course of this under-current; all we can do is to go on forwarding to our friends such plain, honest facts as can be proved in the face of day, and praying to God to strengthen the hands of our generous advocates."

They proceeded to discuss the merits of different persons whom it was proposed to send up; and Richard, meanwhile, entered into conversation with his new friend.

"It does not seem as if you had much to expect," he sorrowfully observed.

"No; but we use the means, and look to God for the blessing that he can give when he sees good. It is an awful proof of the power of Satan, that such statements should be laid, year after year, before upwards of six hundred gentlemen, chosen to represent the whole body of the

people, and to watch over the country's interests, and yet no effectual redress be given. I say effectual, because some bills have been passed, and some improvements made; but at the same time clauses in the old acts that afforded great protection have been expunged, and very grievous alterations made. You saw two instances in court. You saw what a mere farce the fine can be reduced to on the most aggravated charges; where formerly ten or twenty pounds was the lowest that could have been imposed on such a conviction; and, moreover, every separate offence was formerly visited with a fine, whereas now only one can be recovered for any particular day. You also saw, what probably you were not aware of, a near relation of the offender sitting to judge the cause."

"Yes, I was told it by a friend of mine—one Mr. South."

The other looked at him for a moment with less cordiality; then said, "Have you been long intimate with South?"

"No; I sleep at his house, and that's all."

"Then let me, as a Christian man, caution you of a danger you may not be aware of. South is loud in his complaints of what we all suffer from; but the remedy that he seeks is even worse than the disease, I fear—"

He paused, and Richard said, "You may speak freely to me. I'm no tale-bearer; and to tell you the truth I didn't half like South's way of talking."

"Then be on your guard; for I greatly fear that he is involved in political plans that would not bear daylight. Some men who long to overturn all right government have come among us and endeavoured to make our grievances a pretext for engaging in rebellious schemes. This we never can do; those of us at least who know right from wrong, who fear God, and desire to be found in the path of duty, however hard, knowing that the way of transgressors is much harder. Still from the deplorable ignorance of those brought up in the mills, there are multitudes ready to listen eagerly to such suggestions; and it is too probable that the cruel neglect of the British Government as concerns those employed in the manufactories, to which her commercial prosperity is mainly owing, will yet recoil on themselves in

some terrible outbreak, aided by those who are made desperate by oppression, and utterly careless as to future consequences, because they have been left in ignorance and unbelief."

"Thank you for putting me on my guard. I confess I sometimes feel as if I could take vengeance on those who have brought my family to such a state, but it is only the sinful thought of a moment. However, it might be taken advantage of by anybody who observed it. I will watch and pray."

The other took his hand: "Green, the lesson you have learned in your young years, and which you are now called on to put in practice, will become more valuable to you every day. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, as the scriptures have foretold; and the knowledge that is so boasted of is only making men more skilful in mischief, or puffing them up with the false pride that comes before a fall. I look about and see all this: I look within myself and understand it. In my heart I find the seed of every evil thing, and I know that it is only by the grace of God working in me that I am not constantly following a multitude to do evil. If I ceased to watch, as you say, and to pray, I should directly fall. How then can I wonder to see others, in their different ranks and stations, betrayed into bad courses, when they never think of applying to God for help against the devices of their invisible enemy? If the rulers of England and her great men knew the value of what is now being given over to Satan and his tools, they would endeavour to stop the mischief by imparting religious instruction proportioned to the great increase of the demand for it. But I fear they regard us only as machines, while making a great show of raising us in the scale of knowledge; and so they are loading, as it were to the muzzle, a gun that will burst and destroy them."

"I think," said Richard, "that South is such a man: he seems to have a deal of learning for one in his station; but I should be tempted to fear he would better like to revenge himself than to see what is wrong quietly set right."

"We must not be too ready to judge others," answered his new acquaintance, "but it is our duty to observe and to take

warning, and to look to our own ways when we see our fellows slide. I always find South and some others ready enough to dwell upon the grievances we suffer; but when I propose the peaceable, legal way of trying to get them redressed, they fall back with some excuse or other, generally pointing to the small benefit we have yet got by our efforts, and saying the evil is too great to be remedied by means so tame."

"And you are expecting to see the success of your endeavours?" asked Richard.

"I hope it may please God, before long, to rouse the feelings of our fellow-countrymen on behalf of the poor children employed in these mills. If that was done, we should soon see a change for the better. Now suppose a lady, the mother of a young family, looking upon her own children and thinking what she would feel if they were situated like the wretched little ones in the factories,—or suppose another, employed in teaching or overseeing a nice school of girls, and comparing their comforts and advantages with what our little labourers want, and what they suffer,—don't you think these ladies would use their influence over their own husbands, fathers, brothers and friends, to make it a point with the candidate they vote for, that he should support our cause in the Parliament? You see, it is no party matter at all; whig or tory, conservative or radical, any man may assist our noble champion Lord Ashley, without interfering with his general politics, or offending the party he belongs to. And, alas, Green, men seem to think much more of being consistent in their party support than in doing what is acceptable before God! We see no obstacle to having a large majority with us, if the country would but take up our distressed situation."

"There is another thing," said Richard. "You know a vast number of the voters that send members to Parliament are men in humble life. In the farming districts, and such places as I come from, it is so: and I suppose in towns the small shopkeepers and trades-people have a good deal to do in turning the poll where there is a contest."

"Certainly. and what do you infer from it?"

"Why, the gentlefolk have a power of

interest among those people, and might use it with such good effect as to make it worth any candidate's while to let it be known he would do his best to help the cause of the poor factory children. And why don't they do it?"

"For want of being rightly informed upon the subject. You see, the facts are brought before Parliament, by having witnesses up to be examined on oath before the committee; these reports, as they are called, are printed, and sold too: but, Green, I don't think one lady in a thousand ever looks into them, to say nothing of other classes: and if they are not read, how can the statements be known? What we chiefly want is to have some public information given about it, such as will be read, and may stir up the hearts of God's servants to succour us. We want neither their gold nor their silver," he added, with energy, "we want nothing that would lessen their wealth or encroach on their time. All we want is, that they should secure to us a fair share in the blessings of the English constitution, by making a right use of their own privileges. As we have shown, they can all, more or less, bring an influence to bear on the House of Commons; and that has the power of righting all that is wrong and oppressive among their poor country-people."

He paused: his raised voice had attracted the notice of the president, who remarked, "True, Hudson; and that is one great object of our meetings here. Many good works are going on through the land; and the time may not be far off when a call will be heard for more information respecting the factory children, by those who know how to draw public attention to any cause they wish to promote. It is not long since, that I happened to be at a meeting called by some ladies who wanted to forward the education of children in some very distant heathen land: it was a new thing, and excited curiosity. The room was full: some gentlemen came forward; read descriptions, commented on the miserable state, both bodily and spiritual, of those children, proposed resolutions, established a society, and made a collection for the express purpose of spreading those facts, and extending that appeal through the land. I listened with interest, and cheer-

fully gave my mite: but a sadness was on my mind as I thought, 'The children of your own people, the little neighbours of your own houses, are in as bad a plight as these distant heathen babes; and would not He whose eye is alike on both equally bless an effort that should do good at home?' I did not desire to see the benefit withheld from the others, God forbid! but I thought of the words, 'These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone.'"

A murmur of assent ran through the room, and Hudson remarked to Richard, "Oh that we had a few of those Christian ladies to take the hard case of our factory little ones into their kind and zealous hands!"

"It is no more than one might expect from them," he returned, "considering how well it becomes them to care for poor little friendless children."

The business of the meeting being over, Richard walked homewards, in company with his new acquaintance, to whom he remarked, "I cannot but say this has been the best thing I have yet met with in M. Still you seem to be getting on but slowly in your good work; and meanwhile what is to become of those belonging to us who are suffering all these miseries?"

Hudson shook his head: "That is a question which God alone can supply an answer to. I know how anxious you must feel, and how slow the progress must appear which can bring little, if any relief to those you love. But we have no remedy—no help. As to myself, I am employed in a situation that has no great hardship belonging to it, after fighting my way through all the troubles that beset a fellow who tries to serve God according to his conscience. For myself, I have now no complaint to make."

"And you have no family?"

"None: none belonging to me now." He sighed heavily, and added, "Once I had ties, even dearer than yours, for I was a husband, and, in anticipation, a father too. I began in the mills very young, and when labour was more severe, because less limited than it now is. A twin sister, dearer to me than my life, entered at the same time; but she soon died of consumption. After some years, I met,

in the same line of labour, with a young person of whom it is enough to say that Helen Fleetwood constantly reminds me of her, both in manners and in mind. The seed of divine truth had taken root in my spirit very early; and I do not think I was allowed to disgrace such profession of religion as a young lad could make in a mill. Similarity of feeling, under the same trials and the same consolations, drew us together: we waited long, that I might, by an appointment which was promised me, be better able to maintain my dear Martha in a respectable home. I got the situation, and we were married; but not without many warnings from our friends that, through the injurious effect of factory labour, she would never live to be a mother. We were content to leave that to God; and one year of the purest domestic peace and happiness I enjoyed, only damped by the uneasy apprehension with which we could not but look forward to the birth of an expected little one. The hour came; and I was left, after a day and night of torturing suspense, to kneel beside the bodies of the dead mother and her dead babe."

Richard was too much moved to utter a word of sympathy: he put his arm through Hudson's as they walked, and its friendly pressure alone bespoke his feelings.

"It was all right," resumed Hudson; "she expected it, and meekly waited for the summons. Indeed, her joy was great at times; but the thought of leaving me bereft of my only earthly treasure afflicted her. Well, I had not built my house on the sand; and even such a storm as this failed to move it. Since then, I have devoted myself to two objects: one is that for which you found us assembled: the other is the instruction of children, so far as my means will go, and opportunities can be found, in the way that I know to be the way of pleasantness, and which my precious Martha found even to the last mortal gasp to be the path of peace."

"What a murdering business this mill-work is!" exclaimed Richard. Then, abruptly, he asked, "Do you think it will kill Helen?"

Hudson seemed unwilling to reply; but when urged, he said, "Not being in the same mill, nor much acquainted with the

family, I have not such good opportunities of judging how they are affected by it. Helen teaches a class in my Sunday-school, and I hear a great deal of her from others, who witness her patient continuance in well doing under much opposition and persecution."

"But from what you do see, how should you guess, as to the effect on her health?"

"Not favourably, I confess: I see the weakness of the ancles, the narrowness, so to speak, of the frame, a stoop, and a quickness of breathing, together with the increasing paleness of her complexion."

"Would not country air, and exercise, and the way of living she was used to, cure it all?"

"It might," said Hudson, hesitatingly.

"Mary does not seem to suffer much, if at all."

"Not in bodily health."

"Ah, I know what you mean."

Then a silence ensued; till Richard asked if he knew Parkins, Hudson answered that he did.

"Is he a good man?"

"He is; but he holds some doctrines good in themselves, which, carried to the extreme he goes to, have an effect not favourable to Christian watchfulness."

"So I feared: my grandmother placed my little brother under his care, and he seems to have left him pretty much to chance."

"No, not that: but probably he has put off doing any thing till God begins openly to work in him. Parkins seems to forget that while waiting for a fair wind, all should be put in readiness to make the most of it. But how is this? I thought your brother was unable to go out."

"I have two: now come home with me, and see them all, for you are just the person we want to set us on a little. Neither South nor Parkins, nor any body they seem to know, is like the friends we had at L., you alone resemble them.

Hudson willingly accompanied the warm-hearted youth, and was received with a hearty welcome. Helen, after bestowing her share to it, said, "Granny, this is the person I told you of, who stood my friend more than once, by speaking kindly of me to the overlookers, when others did differently."

"And this is the person," said Mary,

"who has made me hold my tongue when nobody else could." Her glance towards Helen, and the latter's benevolent smile, indicated that Mary's volubility had been directed against her.

"And this is the person," added James, "whom of all the people in M. I have most wished to know."

"Then why, my dear boy, did you not send for me?"

"Because your time was better employed; you are always teaching those that know nothing, and I only wanted you to come and remind me of what I have been mercifully taught already."

Katy, meanwhile, stood blushing and brightening, evidently the best pleased of all. She peeped up in his face, as he patted her head, saying, "It's you are the gentleman that taught me to take pains and learn fast, that I might be a help and a comfort to them. And when they were sick"—here Hudson interrupted her suddenly, "Well, Katy, you certainly took a friend's advice in good part, and learned your book remarkably well. And do you continue to learn from it? Do you love the blessed Bible, my little maid?"

"I do sir."

With a swelling heart Richard contemplated the group, rejoicing that he had found at last one individual able to influence the whole party, and sure to influence them for good. The conversation immediately took a turn most congenial to the Christian mind; and they were discoursing on the sweets of that rest which remaineth for the people of God, in the spirit of those whose way through the wilderness is both sharp and steep, and who can therefore appreciate the promised country, when Helen, half rising from her chair, fell back fainting. All was alarm and agitation: restoratives were applied, such as they could command, but the fit continued, and as the darkening hue of death seemed to gather round her lips, and its damps to ooze from her clay-cold hands, Mary exclaimed, "She never was so far gone, or for so long before. Oh, Helen, look up! don't leave us!" and she burst out into a passion of crying.

"Before!" repeated the widow; "has this happened before?"

"Often and often, ma'am," answered Katy, mournfully. "She has fell down on

the heaps of cotton, and laid there like as father when he was dead."

"And I was never told!" exclaimed the old woman indignantly, as she chafed the hollow temples on which her tears fell. "My poor lamb, you have indeed been among those who had no pity!"

"She almost swore us not to tell," sobbed Mary, "and they say it is such a common thing in Helen's room, owing to its being the hottest and most fatiguing of all, that nobody minds it. We only hear of it from others; except two or three times I happened to be near her."

Symptoms of returning life now appeared; and Hudson, who had stood in silent sorrow contemplating the scene, drew Richard away, saying, "The more air, and the less excitement she has, the better: so come, take a turn down in the court with me."

No sooner were they fairly out of hearing than the youth, with a violence that startled his companion, exclaimed, "They shan't murder her—I say they shan't! And now I swear by all"—

"Green! Green!" cried Hudson, in a tone so loud and authoritative, that it checked him at once; "what advantage are you going to give the devil now? Will you add swearing to wrath? Come, recollect yourself, my dear fellow, and remember in whose hand are the keys of death and of hell—remember who openeth and no man can shut; who shutteth, and no man can open; remember by whom the very hairs of her head are numbered."

"You did right to stop me," faltered Richard, "I see the folly and wickedness of angering my only Friend. But these things set me mad. Only think of their letting her faint, and faint, day after day, and never even tell my grandmother—never get her a little absence allowed to recover her strength!"

"I tell you plainly, my friend," said Hudson, "no absence would be permitted on the ground of what is so very common in the mills, and occasions so short an interruption of work. Distressing as it was to witness, I felt it less than you would suppose, from sheer habit."

"Then you don't think it a dangerous sign?"

"I did not say that."

"What then, on this earth, can I do?"

"I'll tell you. We will set ourselves to work to find out a change of employment for her. I have known it produce good effects. Some of the rooms are cooler than others. The Messrs. Z. will not listen, I fear, or rather their overlooker, to any proposal for improving her condition where she is; but the gentleman who sent you to our meeting has interest enough to get her into a far more comfortable mill; and we must prevail on him to interfere."

"Now, all the blessings!"—and Richard's emotion was so great he could not finish the sentence but by clasping Hudson's hand and raising his tearful eyes to heaven.

"Thank you, my friend, I know your heart's desire for me, and it is sweet to have an interest in each other's prayers. I feel for you in more ways than one, Richard: you regard Helen with something beyond a brother's affection, and no wonder."

"I'm too young to think of marrying, if that's what you mean," said the lad with manly frankness; "but I dare say you are right. By the feel that came over me, when I saw her lay deadlike, I should not live long after her."

"Ah, Richard, that is the language of a heart that does not know the strength of the body it is lodged in. Some of us must live to close the grave over all that sweetened our lot below, whatever unwillingness we feel to survive them. And while God has work for us to do," he added with fervour, "so be it!"

"Now let us go back, Mr. Hudson. I promise you I'll keep very patient, depending on your doing what you say the very first thing to-morrow morning."

"Certainly, the very first, if we be spared to see it; and I'll take you to the mill I spoke of, and show you all the rooms; and then we can judge which will be the fittest for Helen."

"Oh, I wish I knew how to thank you!"

"It is not much I can do; what I can I will. But remember we have difficulties to encounter yet, in more than one quarter."

"Pho! what care I for difficulties," cried Richard, with a flash of his natural joyousness, at the same time pitching high into the air a small pebble that he had picked up. "Do you think I'm such a baby

as to expect things to tumble out, of themselves, just as I would have them? You lazy manufacturers are so used to see the machinery do your work for you, that you can't judge of us field-labourers, who carry all before us by mere strength and perseverance."

Hudson smiled: "You have odd notions of machinery, my fine fellow, if you think it does our work for us. It only make us work."

"Little's the machinery I want to keep me going, when the work to be done is for the advantage of—we won't name no names, if you please, Mr. Hudson," he continued more merrily and archly than before; "and as to the great secret that's between us now, according to your finding out, mum! not a word to any living soul."

"Of course not," replied Hudson; and as he followed Richard's now bounding step up the creaking stairs, he sighed heavily over the recollection of his own early hopes, and the sad presentiment of a coming blight on those of his interesting companion.

Helen was perfectly recovered; and her anxiety to prove it induced a cheerfulness of manner that enlivened the whole party, now completed by the addition of Willy. The evening passed delightfully: it was like one of their own cottage evenings; and, when parting in the street, Hudson re-iterated his promise of taking Richard to his friend's mill the next day, after consulting with Mr. H——, whom they were to see early. Richard most cordially blessed him, and walked on to South's, repeating to himself his conviction that there was not such another perfect character in all the world as his new friend. Even Mr. Barlow came short of his standard just then, so full was the poor boy of that hope to which a young spirit cleaves as to its natural element. He saw no real difficulties in the way of Helen's removal to what his fancy pictured as a sphere of comparative enjoyment in the superior mill; and beyond that lay a vista terminated by a cottage resembling the home of his infancy, which he was at liberty to fit up as he pleased. Sweet seemed the toils that were to earn that visionary independence; short and swift the years that must intervene before he might hope to rise so high in the squire's service as to warrant the

expectation. He fell to considering, on his now pleasant pillow, the respective merits of woodbines, jasmynes, China roses, clematis, and other candidates for the honour of overshadowing that rustic porch where Helen was to sit, on a summer evening, and superintend the knitting of his infirm grandmother, while busily engaged in needlework for other branches of the family; and in the midst of his fragrant perplexities the young gardener fell asleep.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DEATH OF HOPE.

HUDSON, punctual to his appointment, brought the desired permission to visit his friend's cotton-mill, together with an assurance from Mr. H. that he would do every thing in his power to effect the admission of Helen into that establishment, at the same time reminding Hudson that difficulties might arise, not easily to be surmounted. The afternoon was the time fixed on for proceeding to the factory, situated several miles from M.; and as they crossed some stubble-fields, where the bright sun-beam fell warm and unclouded, while the little birds sported around them, peering for a grain of corn, or snatching from the bramble its ripening treasure, Richard felt as though the last few days had been passed in a feverish dream, and marvelled at the remembrance of depression so severe as to have already blanched his cheek and dimmed his eye. "Let the mill be what it may," said he, "the situation is enough to determine me. Why the very breath one draws here is like new life after that horrid town."

"Yes," replied Hudson, "at this hour and under such a sky, I confess it is: but we must not forget that the mill-work lasts from before sunrise till after sunset, most part of the year; and as the ground lies low, unwholesome mists will rise early and late. The situation is not considered so healthy as you might suppose: at least for those who cannot enjoy the sunshine."

They soon quitted the fields, approaching a sort of village composed of exceeding-

ly poor, uncleanly-looking cottages. The air lost much of its freshness, seemingly impregnated by the smoke that rose from several towering chimnies attached to buildings disproportionably low. Conspicuous in the midst, or rather on the edge of the cluster, wholly detached from all the others, rose a lofty square fabric of imposing appearance, to which Hudson pointed, saying, "There's our mill."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Richard, "why that's a noble-looking place to be sure. And only see, Mr. Hudson, how the sun shines upon all the windows on that side. Ay and it's plain he must shine there all day, for I can see through it, the glasses are so plenty, and I see it's open to the south-east as well as to the south-west."

"All the rooms are lighted on three sides, I believe," observed Hudson.

"What a size they must be! Come this is a deal better than I thought; and there can be no want of fresh air in it."

Hudson shook his head: "The windows are never open."

"That's bad: but rooms so large must be airy of themselves, and cheerful too they can't help being, with so much sunshine."

"You see it under every advantage," said Hudson, "and must judge accordingly."

They now entered a long archway, where Hudson inquired for the principal acting manager, who soon appeared, and conducted them up a flight of stone stairs. "I bring you here first," said he to Richard, "instead of taking you in a regular way through the rooms, because I have some orders to give respecting the machinery." Thus speaking, he opened a door, and the youth stood in mute astonishment at the scene presented to him.

The apartment, though large, was by no means high in proportion to its size; and along the ceiling, closely placed together, ran a number of black leather straps, attached to wheels and pullies, every one of which was in the most rapid motion, accompanied by a noise sufficient to drown any voice not raised to a painful pitch. On the floor stood a vast number of frames, seemingly all iron, with just space sufficient between them to allow a passage for the operations of their attendants. These

were chiefly girls, dirty, barefooted, and gloomy-looking, who cast a cold glance on the strangers, and pursued their work, which consisted in watching the movements of innumerable cones of cotton, the threads being supplied by machinery, which also kept the spindles perpetually revolving, each when filled requiring to be replaced by another. The party walked round the room, but no variety appeared in the occupation; each frame exactly resembled the rest; each had its own leather straps running on their pulleys; and its own wheel, or flier, fixed against the ceiling as it appeared, whirling round with the same rapidity, the same monotonous noise as its fellows. The same mechanical employment occupied each individual labourer—a human piece of mechanism, attached to those of iron and leather, passing to and fro within a confined space, with an air of vacant listlessness such as Richard had never beheld among any class of work-people. The air of the room, if air it might be called, which felt more like the absence of that refreshing element, was oppressive to a most sickening degree; its prevailing savour was that of rank oil, necessarily used in great quantities for the supplying the leather, and greasing the machinery; the temperature was dreadfully high, and a tightness came on his chest, that rendered the operation of breathing quite laborious. Every minute brought an increase of these oppressive sensations, and glad he was when the manager, opening a door, conducted them into another apartment, divided by a wooden partition from the former.

This contained the master-power, the mighty engine that kept every thing in motion. An immense iron wheel, of which only the upper half appeared above the floor and reached to the roof, raised high to afford it space, was making its rapid revolutions, by means of two enormous joints of the same metal, that, playing from above, alternately raised and depressed what Richard would have called the handles of the wheel. The pulsation of the boarding on which he stood, as the thundering strokes fell rapidly upon his ear, almost dismayed the astonished rustic, and he shrank with cautious eye from approaching the narrow chasm within which the wheel was carried round with such a

tremendous sweep. Near the door was a tall upright frame, round which two large iron balls were whirled at the extremity of strong rods. Every thing was on a scale so gigantic, the motion was so impetuous, the noise so deafening, that he felt stunned.

When they returned to the work-room the manager pointed to a wooden frame, reaching high from the floor, and said, "You see we box off our machinery."

"What does he mean?" asked Richard, as the other stopped to give some order.

"There is a very dangerous thing, called an upright shaft, in that box," replied Hudson, "It keeps constantly in rapid motion, and when left exposed, very dreadful injury is inflicted, and often instant death to the poor children who are caught in passing it.

"Can any mortal man be so wickedly cruel," said Richard: "Nothing should bribe me to let Mary or Willy ever go near such works."

Hudson shook his head: "Mary must pass it many times in a day, in Mr. Z.'s mill, and it is not until some severe measures have been taken, that our factory gentlemen in general are brought to box it off, as you see here. That is one of the crying evils against which our friends direct their strong efforts."

Richard made some remark, of which the word "murdering" alone reached his friend's ear. They were now again in the room first entered, and the oppression seemed to fall more heavily than before on his lungs. "At any rate," said he, "Helen shan't come to this room. A baker's oven would be as comfortable, and a deal more wholesome."

The next room, however, was no better: the machinery was similar in appearance, though belonging to a different stage of the work; the employment of the labourers was not the same, but their aspect precisely so; and the atmospheric evil not one whit ameliorated. Richard walked round as before, Hudson keeping the manager in conversation, and anxiously did he look for some token of cheerfulness, or even of ordinary intelligence, among the young people. Many had features evidently formed to express it; and some wore an air of boldness far from agreeable: but the same absence of all

that characterizes the youthful countenance still prevailed; the same look of gloom and listlessness, the same measured movement, attendant on that of the whirling machinery about them.

"I am sick of the sight of those twirling bobbins," said he to Hudson: "is the whole place full of them?"

"No, we are going through the factory the wrong way, and shall end, I suppose, where the work begins. You will soon see the cotton preparing for this stage of twisting and filling."

They next found themselves in a room crowded with low iron frames, of which the front parts advanced and receded in perpetual motion, just leaving space between for the girls to stand. Threads were stretched upon the frames, which incessantly snapped, and the labourers' office was to catch and piece the separated ends.

"This is Mary's work," said Hudson; "and Katy's is to creep underneath, and pull off the loose cotton."

"Why, she would be crushed to death."

"Habit makes her expert in avoiding the danger: but you see it is fatiguing and the least heedlessness would be dangerous."

Richard both saw and felt it: a new impression with regard to factory-work was fast taking place of the former one; but he said little.

They soon found themselves in an apartment where the machinery and the labour were wholly dissimilar. The former consisted of enormous cylinders, piled one above another, and covered with a moveable case, which was raised to admit of the necessary operations, performed chiefly by men: but a number of girls and young women were also employed in looking to the deep cans where the cotton, rent to pieces by the cylinders, was thrown out in beautiful flakes. These rapidly filled, and when full were taken away, being replaced by empty ones. There was, however, a worse annoyance in that room than in any of the preceding; the flue—fine particles of cotton wool, so impregnated the air, that Richard soon found not only his coat covered, but his throat lined with them. At first he had preferred this branch of the work, but the irritating effect of the flue was tormenting.

"This is Helen's department," said Hudson.

"This!" and Richard looked round him with painful curiosity. Just then, the hour for tea arrived, and a signal being given, the whole machinery at the same instant stood still. The manager apologized for leaving them, saying he would be back in a quarter of an hour, and Richard eagerly watched the effect on the labourers of this short respite from toil.

There were no seats: they gathered themselves in groups, or stood singly leaning against the frames, or sat down on the floor, hastily swallowing whatever they had brought for the meal. Of course, it was abundantly mixed with flue; but this appeared a less evil in Richard's eye than the mixing of young people of different sexes, and the sort of conversation that seemed to be passing among them. Many, indeed, appeared to think of nothing but the luxury of a short rest on the floor for their weary bodies; but evidently there was a great deal going on, in an under-tone, that would not have borne publishing. He became impatient, and said, "Let us go back to some of the rooms we have seen; for I want to find out one where they are more comfortable—and more safe," he added, after a pause.

The search, however, was fruitless, so far as comfort was concerned. In these rooms the girls with difficulty squatted themselves in small parties between the rows of frames, which ran quite across them. The same aspect of exhaustion, the same vacancy, and lack of youthful animation prevailed. Hollow cheeks, heavy eyes, narrow chests, and stooping shoulders met the inquiring gaze at every turn. Discontent, not noisy or active, but gloomy and silent, seemed impressed on all, together with a sort of helpless resignation to what they knew must be. Hudson spoke often and kindly as he passed them, but seldom got a reply—never a cheerful one. Their minds seemed to stagnate, their spirits to have wholly evaporated, and a sort of indifference the farthest possibly removed from all feeling of enjoyment, reigned supreme. The time allowed for their meal soon expired; in a moment every wheel was flying round, every strap in motion, every little spindle revolving in its place, and with heavy step the

attendants resumed their stations, pursuing the same monotonous work, which if Richard had been a classical scholar he might aptly have compared to the punishment of Sisyphus.

The manager now rejoined them, and Richard saw the remaining departments; the first and last stages; the weighing and rolling, and carding and drawing out of the raw material; the winding and storing and packing of the finished thread; but though some of the rooms enjoyed more ventilation, and were less oppressively heated than others, he saw nothing to cheer him; and they had passed the outer gate some minutes before he broke silence.

"How different a mill is from all I had fancied!"

"What did you expect?"

"Why, I supposed it was a dark, dismal-looking place, where the people had to run about, and work very fast, with a great deal on their minds, and a world of management necessary, but this is nothing of the sort."

"Then you find it better than you expected?"

"Better! no; fifty times worse. You see, I'm used to hard labour, and can't say but I sometimes get more than I like of out-door work in all weathers; but then, Mr. Hudson, I have worked like a man not like a wheel and pulley. My mind has gone along with my hands, and I had something to keep me in remembrance that I was better than the spade I dug with. I never was idly disposed; but if fatigue came over me for a minute or so, I could stop my spade and rest upon it; it didn't dig of itself, and force my foot to follow it."

"That last," said Hudson, "is the most reasonable part of your remark. As to the first, if you consider, there is some room for thought in the work you have just seen. A machine can't put the cotton in the scales, or tell when the weights are equal; nor can it know when the threads break, and piece them, or reckon the bales, and ticket them; or——"

"It's all very true; but tell me what it is makes the people look so like machines, if they don't feel so?"

"Many things, Green, assist to produce

that effect. Did not the air of the room oppress you?"

"Indeed it did. Sometimes in summer, just before a great thunder-storm, I have felt as if I was pent up in a box, with a weight on my head, and really got quite dizzy for a while; but though that is the nearest thing I can think of to liken it to, those rooms were fifty, ay, five hundred times worse. The weight seemed to be not only on my head, but all over me; and then the sickening smell and the whirring noise—I'll tell you what, the first few days in a factory would make me ill, and when I got over that, I should become stupid."

"You have answered your own question so far. If we had no other plea for short hours and a frequent change of hands, the dreadful heat and unwholesomeness of the atmosphere would be enough. You may suppose what it must be when the gas is lighted, adding to the closeness and the bad smell of the place: in winter they require it for many hours, morning and evening. Then the sunshine, cheerful as it would otherwise be, comes in at those endless windows with such power as to broil the poor creatures, and make them wish it away, instead of rejoicing in its brightness."

"Another thing," said Richard, "is the constant standing, and just fidgeting about within such a narrow space, in those rooms where we first went; the others are better as to giving more liberty, but the cotton flies about so much in them as to injure, I should think, every body that breathes there."

"It kills many. Did you see the little boy sitting in a heap of the raw cotton, swallowing his portion quite in a cloud of flue?"

"Yes; a ragged, miserable-looking creature he was. I noticed his famished face as he munched that hard, mouldy crust."

"But generally the labourers in that mill are remarkable for a favourable appearance. They are examined by a strictly conscientious surgeon, who is also frequently taken through the rooms, to judge whether any of the people are getting sickly; in which case they are removed."

Richard stared. "Why, Mr. Hudson, what do you call sickly if those pale, yel-

low creatures, with cheeks sunk in, and narrow faces, were not so?"

"I can assure you, Green, you have seen the healthiest and best-regulated mill in M., nay, one of the best in England. There is nobody in it who even looks under age; and every public rule is most strictly obeyed, together with many excellent ones laid down by the owner for the benefit and comfort of his people. The inspectors hold it up as a pattern to every body, and as a proof of what may be done to soften and improve the system. The poor people would flock to it from every other establishment, only for a strict regulation to the contrary on the part of the owner; and it is to get over this, in Helen's favour, that I fear we shall find a difficulty."

"It will not matter; for I don't want to bring her here."

"Why so?"

"I tell you," said Richard, impatiently, "It would turn her into a stone. She would droop and die. Twelve hours!" he repeated, "twelve hours a day shut up in such a place, and in such company! No, she shall go back to the country, and weed in the fields, or feed a farmer's pigs—anything but such a life as this."

Hudson looked greatly distressed. He could not bear to tell the irritated youth how very much worse in every respect was the place she at present laboured in, compared with that which they had visited. Long habit had so familiarized him with the moody, vacant looks of the factory-labourers, that he did not expect they would have made so strong an impression on the mind of his companion. In fact it is the peculiar feature that strikes a visiter whose attention is in any measure directed to the countenances of the mill-people. Seen at their work, they are a community of automata. Nothing seems to animate them. The cold listlessness of their looks sends a chill to the heart of the spectator, who, if he feel rightly, must feel it a degradation to his species to be chained, as it were, to a parcel of senseless machinery, confused by its din, and forced to obey its movements with scarcely an interval for thought or for repose. This is the case where the labourers are principally adults; not in the mocking sense of having "the strength and appearance of fourteen

years;" but really young men and women. The cheerless though noisy monotony of their lives; the total absence of all that can elevate the mind, even so far as an habitual contemplation of God's works elevates that of the plough-boy, or expands it into social kindness among loving kindred, or pleasant companions—this stamps the character of vacancy, selfishness, and gloom, on faces that should beam with the gladness, if not the intelligence, of youth. The gentle spring-time of life is checked, its budding promises nipped and blighted by the unkindness of an atmosphere such as God never made, and such as man could never have prepared for his fellows to pine in, had not the lust of gold steeled his heart against every pleading of humanity. Machinery yields an immense profit; therefore machinery must be first cared for; and the question is, not by what means the deleterious effects accompanying its operations might be mitigated, if they cannot be neutralized, to the labourers attendant on its movements; but how may those movements be quickened into tenfold velocity, irrespective of the tenfold injury inflicted on the poor, who, for a morsel of bread are compelled to link themselves to its wheels, and to bury themselves in the heat of its cauldrons.

This refers to such as may be supposed of age to choose for themselves; and Richard had remarked mothers, probably, of grown-up families, engaged in all the departments, with elderly men, and those of middle age mingled with the throng, particularly where the great carding-machines threw out their flue so abundantly. They, of course were under no compulsion, save that of poverty; and had they rather chosen to starve, they had liberty so to do; but an immense proportion of the hands employed in the mills are mere children, driven thither by parental authority; their time, their health, their lives regarded as bare matter of merchandize between two parties, of whom the one was eager to grasp whatever the commodity would fetch, and the other to wring out from his helpless purchase the utmost value that it was capable of producing. The one careful to expedite his child to the scene of exhausting labour; the other to expedite his wheels and spindles with the least possible intermission while those

poor little fingers and feet are at his disposal; the one counting his pence, the other his packages; and each jealous lest he should have failed to extract full profit from the withering frame of his human machine. And as is the child, so is the dreadful responsibility banded from one to the other.

"I support my children," says the father, "and being a poor man, I must not keep them idle; they must do what they can to help. I hire them out to a gentleman to serve him, and if he overwork them the blame is his. I can't interfere with his establishment—I take it for granted he knows his duty, being an educated gentleman, with a family of his own probably; and of course he will do what is right."

"I live by the produce of my mills," says the manufacturer, "I have laid out immense sums on fitting them up, and in laying in an abundant stock of the raw material. I have an undoubted right to make what profit I can on this costly speculation, and to do so I must avail myself to the full of the capabilities of my works. It is not for me to judge what other people's children are competent to do; I leave that to their legitimate guardians, who must know the nature and extent both of their abilities and my requirements. If these guardians accept my terms, and place their little ones at my disposal, I am bound to conclude that they are fully able to keep pace with my machinery, and I must compel them so to do, or I lose unjustly in the bargain. If they are unfit for the task, let those answer for the consequences who voluntarily send them to me."

Voluntarily!—No, it is not a voluntary act. You well know that the cravings of nature must be satisfied; and though your poverty-stricken brother asks no more than the dry morsel from which your pampered dog would turn away, still without that morsel he cannot exist. You enter tacitly, at least, into a confederacy with your wealthy compeers, and leave him no option between actual starvation and a compact whereby he obtains a scanty meal, and a shelter from the inclement sky, at the price of his own or his children's life-blood. With one hand you niggardly supply that vital stream, with the other you copiously drain it away; and when by this sure pro-

cess of daily diminution you have left only the breathless carcase, your progress, rolling along the middle way in your luxurious carriage, or guiding the full-fed steed upon its track, will not be impeded by yon miserable group, who, stealing past upon the narrow causeway, follow a pauper's funeral. Those well-worn cloaks of rusty black are but thrown on, by parochial charity, for the occasion; the interminable toil of those now lifeless limbs, though it supplied you with the rich comparisons that you glory in displaying, could not lay by the superfluity of a burial-fee for the victim, nor provide a mourning garment for the heart-broken, conscience-stricken survivors. And why conscience-stricken? If they squandered in strong drink, or appropriated in idleness the child's earnings, they have indeed a terrible item to answer for in your common account with God: but if there was no alternative—if nothing short of wealth would satisfy you, where nothing short of early destruction to others was its probable, its almost inevitable price—then will they stand, not as fellow culprits, beside you, but as accusing witnesses against your soul; at the day when worldly riches cannot avail; when worldly honours shall be proved a mocking dream; and when worldly gratifications shall but be remembered to sharpen the gnawings of the worm that dieth not; and to quicken the burnings of the fire that shall not be quenched.

"What a pretty girl is that," remarked a visiter to the junior member of an extensive cotton-firm, who was exhibiting to him the different departments of the mill. "What a fine creature she will be at twenty!"

The young gentleman looked at the beautiful creature pointed out, then glanced his eye over the whole throng of her youthful companions, and turning it on the visiter with a significant leer, quietly answered in an under-tone,—“There are not many in this room who will live to be twenty!”

When Richard Green returned home, he found his grandmother in considerable alarm, while a coarse-looking man was talking in the loud tone of self-satisfied superiority, evidently enjoying her trepidation, “And so, good woman, as I said before, fine words won't butter no pars-nips. 'Tis all right and becoming of you

to thank me for waiting so long; but as I'm not going to wait longer, down, I say, with the rent."

Richard's entrance appeared to increase the widow's distress: she looked appealingly at him, not to invite but to deprecate his interference. He understood her, and crossed over to James, who placed a cold and trembling hand in his, but spoke not.

"I don't believe," continued the landlord, looking round him, "that all the sticks you've got here would fetch the seven and sixpence, to say nothing of costs; but by way of example to the neighbours I shall be forced to execute. I've a deal of property in this court," he continued, pompously drawing himself up, "and what's to become of my rents if tenants go on for a matter of three weeks together without paying a rap?"

"Give me till the beginning of next week, Mr. Scott, and I promise you it shall all be paid."

"I won't, indeed I won't; for I can't! woman. I must buy stock for my trade, or how can I live? You have children in the mill, and they get their wages punctual; but I, a respectable tradesman, sends in my bill to the same parties, and is told by the footman to call again. They forget my account, because 'tis too small for their big pockets; and you refuse it because it's too big for your little one, hey, missus?"

If any one of the party had laughed at this facetiousness, it is probable that Mr. Scott, who set up for a wit in his way, would have been mollified; but his auditors were in no laughing mood, and he became more lofty than ever.

"I tell ye, 'tis no use talking: the money to-day, or an execution to-morrow."

Richard had remained silent: his first impulse was to be rough; for his spirit was strangely chafed; but a better feeling prevailed, and he spoke with his usual civility.

"I'm sorry, sir, my grandmother has been obliged to keep you waiting: but perhaps you will consider how much illness there has been in the family, and take her promise now. I'm sure she will keep it."

"Why, you are a civil-spoken lad, and well dressed too: how came you here?"

"I came to M. on business, for a gentleman in Suffolk."

"Who did you come to?"

"Mr. H. at the great house on the hill."

"The great house on the hill! ha! ha! we've great houses enow, and hills enow, about this big town. However, I know who you mean; and I've some notion of obliging you. Let me see; seven and sixpence, and two and sixpence. Well, old woman, I'll call on you when this week, that began yesterday, is out; and you'll come down with your ten shillings, will you?"

"I will, God helping me," faltered the widow.

"Don't forget then: I can tell you, if it hadn't been for that young fellow speaking so respectfully, I'd have been as good as my word: not for any ill-will I bear you, but to set an example, as I told you before." He nodded and went out.

The widow ran to Richard, and leaning on his shoulder exclaimed, while her tears streamed fast, "I would fain have hid this from you, my child!"

"That is the worst of it, granny: you conceal from me things that I must know, sooner or later, instead of speaking out now I am here to consult with you. And you *may* speak out," he added, mournfully, "for I can't well be more miserable than I am."

A full explanation was at length given; and the fact appeared plain, that with all their struggling they could barely live upon the earnings of the three who laboured for them. Among other things, the system of forfeitures had been rigidly enforced against Mary, whose companions easily provoked her, by noise and in other ways, to incur the fine; and many a sixpence was thus stopped out of her wages. The overlooker never inquired into particulars, nor listened to any mitigating statement: he had redoubled his vigilance since the information was laid against him for ill-treating her, and carefully visited every infringement of the rules with the penalty. Against this there was no appeal: the rules were hung up in the work-room, with the exact sum to be paid for any breach of them; and the fact once proved, the consequence was inevitable. This afforded a sad means of

oppression in some cases; for the children naturally thought less of a pecuniary loss falling on their parents than of present severity to themselves; although in the irritation of disappointment they rarely escaped double punishment at home. Some protection against idleness and insubordination on the part of his labourers, the employer must, in common justice, have; and of the two, this plan of penalties is undoubtedly the best: but that master-evil—the want of due enquiry into the temper and habits of the men to whom are committed the persons, the principles, the interests of so many young creatures, and the absence of a wholesome restraint on their bad propensities, poisons the fountain-head, and carries corruption through the whole mass.

Mary Green needed a strict hand to control her rebellious disposition; and she found one perfectly ready to do it, not for her good or for the advantage of their mutual employer, but from personal dislike. She saw this, and resentment quickened her hot temper to more frequent ebullitions, which generally ended in an open breach of some standing rule, and the imposition of its attendant fine.

These deductions formed no inconsiderable item in the widow's list of losses: Richard had volunteered to make out an exact scale of their income and expenditure, in order to discover where the chief deficiency on the one hand, or extra expense on the other lay: the first was soon calculated and noted down, the latter reluctantly given, for the poor old woman well knew how her boy's affectionate heart would be wrung by the miserable insufficiency of their diet and fuel; but he would not be baffled, and many a time was the cuff of his jacket drawn across his eyes while writing the particulars. At last he threw the pen from him, exclaiming, "Granny, the workhouse is better than this."

"The work-house, Richard, is not open to those who are able to labour, as we are, and can find employment."

"Able!" thought the boy, as he gazed at the withered hand which gently replaced the pen in his. "Well, dearest granny, we will look all these things in the face: go on."

The account was finished, and he said,

"Poor as your fare is, and not enough to support you properly, still it comes pretty nigh within your gains. I can't make out the deficiency."

He was then told of Mary's continual forfeits, which exasperated him: "Are not they content with kicking her about, but must they wrest her earnings from her too?"

The widow told him that it could not be avoided; Mary's conduct really provoking the penalty, as Katy herself had been obliged to admit, when closely questioned; Helen corroborating it. She had reasoned and pleaded with the child, but to no purpose, and must they wait patiently till God gave her a better mind.

"I shall talk to her though," observed Richard, "And try if all my influence is gone. But, oh, granny, those mills are fearful places! I felt as if the hot, unnatural air would melt away all that was good for anything in me, and leave me like one of the senseless machines, to do just whatever I was set about, right or wrong; and you know what advantages the devil will take of that state of mind." Then, after a pause, he exclaimed, "Helen must be an angel to stand it all, and to get better and better, while the rest go to ruin."

"She is no angel," said James, whom they supposed to be asleep, "but a poor sinful mortal; yet a dear child of God, living by faith, and ripening for glory."

Richard's brow contracted, "Must every body be dying who lives like a Christian? Why does not Hudson die then?"

"Some of us die for our good, brother; and some of us live for the good of others."

"Well, darling Jem, we won't argue about that," replied Richard, kissing the cold damp brow of the patient sufferer. "I only wish it might please the Lord to let you live for my good, and I'd work the flesh off my bones for you, James; indeed I would."

"I don't doubt it: but He who loves me better than even you do is going to take me home soon, *very* soon," he added, with emphasis.

Richard gazed on him; then starting up, he said, "I must go this minute to Mr. H., for he bade me be there. The day after to-morrow—early in the morning —." He threw himself on his knees

beside the widow's chair, and clasping his arms round her wept and sobbed like an infant.

And oh, how that maternal bosom yearned over the child so often cradled upon it! She had no words of comfort for him; her own heart was too full for speech; she could but mingle her tears with his. James whispered, "It will do him good; he wanted such a relief." He was right; Richard with swollen eyes, but a calmer spirit, took his hat, and with an affectionate farewell repaired to the great house on the hill, where Hudson had prepared for him a more than usually kind reception.

CHAPTER XX.

THICKENING GLOOM.

MR. H. was one of those happy individuals who, with the means, possess the will to benefit their fellow-creatures. He was not a mill-owner, nor, except with the most benevolent of that class, was he a popular character among them. The great point of difference between Mr. H. and the generality of his manufacturing friends consisted in this; that whereas they considered the personal interests of master and labourer to be things not only irreconcilable, but diametrically opposed one to another, he regarded them as identical. They looked on him as their enemy, because he was the avowed, uncompromising friend of their work-people, more particularly interesting himself on behalf of the children. He could not convince them, nor could they unconvince him, that even on the grounds of worldly policy, they would thrive better by making less haste to be rich at the expense of involving their fellow-creatures in so much misery and sin. They wished he had a mill, and nothing else to subsist by, confident that the pleadings of self-interest would soon stifle the voice of Quixotic benevolence: he was thankful to be spared the temptation; but felt confident that if exposed to it his principles would stand the test, imbibed as they were at the fountain of truth, and nourished by its streams.

When Richard Green appeared before

him this evening, Mr. H. entered at once on the subject of the factory which he had visited, asking what impression it had made on his mind.

"Indeed, sir, I can't say it was a pleasant one. I never saw a place of the kind before, so could not judge of its advantages above others; and having always been used to field-labour, near the sea, I could hardly fancy myself living for a week in such a pent-up, sickly place, with the smell, and the noise, and the wearisomeness of doing the same thing over and over all day long."

"But you must do that in almost any business. For instance, in ploughing a field, don't you go on much in the same way?"

"I don't plough all the year round, sir; nor always in one field. Besides, nothing out of doors can be like those hot rooms."

"Well, what say you to a blacksmith's shop? There is violent heat, and smoke, and noise, and confinement."

"Oh, but, sir, if you please, there's a deal of skill needed to become a good smith, and be able to set up for oneself soon. Then, too, a man likes to feel the strength that's in his arm, and I hope you see the difference between hammering a bar of iron and frittering bits of cotton, sir?"

Richard, animated by his theme, suited the action to the word, and Mr. G. as he marked the proud swing of a muscular arm, rejoiced in his heart that some of England's athletic yeomanry were still left to pursue their manly occupations.

"I suppose," said he, smiling, "you would not object to be a miner, shut out from day-light, and fathoms deep from the air of heaven?"

"I don't know that, sir; there are no mines in my part of the country, and I always think God suits the people to the sort of work he has prepared for them in their own places. Not that I believe any Englishman is made to be stewed for twelve hours a day in such a place as I visited this morning, which, to be sure, is none of God's making. However, sir, I would engage in the mines to-morrow, and do my best in that gloomy place; and at any rate," he added, in a tone that spoke his deep feeling, "at any rate my heart would'n't be pained by seeing weak women and young children pining about me. *They* would breathe the fresh air;

and if my work was dark and hard, it would be lightened by knowing that the wages would keep them in freedom and comfort."

"You are a noble young fellow, Green. I wish I could rouse such a manly spirit in the bosoms of some who have power to mitigate the hardships of those you so tenderly speak of, or even among the parents, the husbands, the brothers, of our poor factory girls."

"Ah, sir, to do justly, and to love mercy, is the gift of God. I'm afraid you can't teach it to those whose hearts are hardened by the love of money; and as for the rest, why what can they do? What can I do, who see all that I love better than myself pining and perishing? They must work, or starve; and no work is within their reach except what the mill-owners give. I see no remedy, except the grave."

"Don't despond. Have you determined to remove the young person of whom Hudson spoke to my friend's mill, supposing I obtain admittance for her there?"

"I have not talked to her yet about it, sir," replied Richard.

"Do, then, and let me know. You are returning to L., I believe, in a day or two, and my packet will be ready. Meanwhile, as I know you have a sick brother, whose situation requires more comforts than you can well procure at this season, oblige me by applying a trifle to his advantage, and for the present good bye; God bless you, and keep you from all evil!"

As with one hand he placed two sovereigns in Richard's, with the other he opened a door, and was gone before he could have even received a word of thanks; but the parting blessing was returned on his head a thousand-fold by the astonished youth, though its accents did not reach his ear.

As an alms to himself, Richard's independent spirit would have shrunk from the gift; but the situation of those for whom it was intended forbade all feeling save that of fervent gratitude. He hastened away, and before even revisiting home, he found the landlord, paid the arrear, with another week's rent in advance, and then proceeded to lay the balance on the lap of his grandmother, where he had so often deposited his little earnings before want was known to them. She received it with

tears of gratitude, and the gladdening influence of such a providential supply once more shed a gleam of cheerfulness over the little circle.

"Helen," whispered Richard, "I have a deal to say to you that concerns nobody else. It is about a factory I saw to-day."

"Don't mention it just now, Richard; wait till we are alone, or with James only. To-morrow is Sunday, and we shall then have opportunity to talk. Not, indeed, about worldly matters," she added, "but something that will give us light as to what course we are to take, even with regard to the things of this life."

With no small satisfaction did the widow steal away, and redeem from pledge a few articles, the absence of which on the Sunday would have greatly distressed her boy. Thus supplied, they made a comparatively respectable appearance, and in the house of God once more united their voices of prayer and praise.

In the afternoon, the widow accompanied the three younger children to their Sunday school, leaving Helen with Richard and James, to whom they read and sang, until the world, with all its cares, seemed lost to sight, and the holy calm of a felt sabbath pervaded their souls. James asked for one more hymn, and selected that beautiful one of Watts—

"There is a land of pure delight."

When the last note died away, Helen spoke,

"Now, dear Richard, while our hearts are fixed, as I hope, on the things that are unseen and eternal, let me say a few words to you. It may be the means of sparing you some trouble—no, not trouble, but anxiety. I well know you would count it no trouble, but a great pleasure, to do any brotherly kindness to me; so please not to interrupt me, but hear me patiently out."

"I will," said Richard, whose mind misgave him at this preface.

"I need not remind you what I am. I will not pain you by recounting acts of generous kindness to a poor orphan, done without any hope or thought of a recompense, but had in remembrance before God, and printed on my very heart. Well, it will some day be a comfort to you to know that none of it all has been lost upon me. Instead of feeling the desolateness

of a friendless child, I have been a most happy girl. I was taught my duty in words, and shown how to perform it by example. You have been a dear, precious brother to me, Richard; the voice of unkindness never reached me, the finger of scorn never was pointed at me, so long as I was under your watchful eye; full of kindness to me, and though you were but a boy, full of protection, too, that nobody cared to despise. I felt the value of it before I lost it, and now —."

"Helen, Helen," exclaimed the agitated youth, with vehement earnestness, "as long as there's a breath in this body——"

"Hush, now, pray do be silent. You promised me, and I can't get through what I have to say unless you let me go on without interrupting. I should not say so much now, only for what is to follow it. I never was very strong in body; my good health was owing more to the quiet life I led, and the sea-breezes of our own dear home. I had peace within, and that made all seem well without; but I dare say wherever I had gone, any change in my way of living would have done the same."

James shook his head; and the dissenting movement was not lost on Richard.

"It matters nothing now," pursued Helen, "for He who has the power of life and death sets us all our bounds, which we cannot pass. It is of no use concealing the truth; I feel sure, quite sure, positively sure, that my days are numbered, and that not many remain. If I was taken back to L. to-morrow, and had every thing again as it used to be, no good could come of it, as to my health. Death is at work in me, and all the care I can have for this world is not to lose the comfort and blessing of being with my first, best, dearest friend—our own granny."

Her voice faltered, and tears trickled down her cheeks, but Richard was mute. He listened in desperate calmness, while James, with closed eyes, seemed lost in prayer. Helen resumed,—

"I know, Richard, you have been planning to have me removed to another mill, where more attention is paid to the comfort of the labourers; but you must consider that the distance is too great for a stronger girl than me, even in the best weather; and you could not get us all into it, and move granny too to a much

more expensive place. If I was stout, I would gladly go there, for I might be able to make something by out-door work, late and early; and coming here on Saturdays, with a better penny in my hand, would almost reconcile me to being away all the week; but it can't be; and I feel sure my path of duty is to stop here, to be a companion to dear granny, and to do what little I can in striving to keep Mary, Willy, and poor Katy from going astray. I hope it may please the Lord that my last illness shan't be so long nor so helpless as this dear boy's," stroking James' pale face, "but even if it is so, I'm sure of the tenderest care from those that never forsook me in health, and never will when I am laid on my dying bed."

She paused, and Richard quietly asked, "Have you any more to say, Helen, or may I put in a word?"

"I have no more to say on that subject."

"Well, then, in the first place you are not a doctor; and it is quite impossible you should know so much about your health as you fancy. 'Tis that vile, infamous mill, and the savages you have to do with, and the fatigue, and the confinement, and the unnatural air of a pent-up place like this. If once you were on the cliffs again ——"

"I should die the sooner, Richard. I used to think of the brisk wind blowing over the cliffs to refresh me, when I felt languid and ill, but now the thought of it makes me shiver, and I rather seem to want the hot air of the work-rooms, that suits me better."

"Ay, as the dying drunkard wants the dram that kills him."

"Don't speak so angrily, Richard; but in answer to what you say about the doctors"—she hesitated, then added, "I thought it my duty to know the real state of the case, and I went to a skilful doctor who is very kind to the poor. He told me nothing more than I was sure of already; but he confirmed me in my opinion."

"Did he say you would die?" gasped Richard.

"He said he could not hold out any hope of a long life to me: and when I pressed him to speak plainly, he owned that by a long life he meant another year or two."

"Now tell me that doctor's name, and

where he lives, for I'll have it from his own lips."

"Mr. Hudson knows him well; but, Richard, what's the use of it all? Man's words can neither shorten nor lengthen my days. We must look to Him who is all-powerful, and pray that he will give us grace to receive at his hand both good and evil. Not that it will be evil to me," she added, looking up most joyously, "to be taken to where my dear Saviour is; but it will be a trial to those that are left, I know."

"I shan't be one of them," said James. "We shall be together still, Helen."

"You are cruelly unfeeling!" exclaimed Richard. "You won't lose her, and you care not what we suffer."

"Yes, dear, I care much for it," replied James, meekly: "there is nothing I would not do to keep her on earth, if it was God's will; for she has been the blessing of our house ever since she set foot in it. I have great peace in my mind; great joy sometimes, and always a clear sight of what the Lord has done for my sinful soul. That is a mercy that He alone could give, but I love this book," laying one hand on the Bible, "which He gave to teach me the right way: and I love this friend," laying the other hand on Helen's, "whom he sent to instruct me in its blessed truths, and to encourage me in my short, but rather painful pilgrimage. Do you think I love you so little as not to wish she might remain, to be the same blessing to you all that she has been to me?"

Richard hung his head over his clasped hands: then suddenly looking up, said, "I can't believe and I won't believe but that the doctors could still save you, by the Lord's blessing. Now, Helen, promise me solemnly that you will do whatever they bid you, when I have spoken to them."

"I am quite ready to do whatever any skilful and honest doctor bids me, if he declares he expects it will restore my health: but if not, Richard, don't embitter my short span with medicines and blisterings, and such things. I suffer little pain now; and I hope I may sink gently, as it were, as many others do." She spoke with a simple feeling, and meek submission that went to Richard's heart. "No," he replied, "no doctor shall lay his hand

on you to make you suffer, for my selfish satisfaction, only if he promises to cure you. And if not, Helen, if not, then you must pray for me that the Lord will give me grace to take patiently the sorrow he sees fit to bring over my young years—a sorrow that will last as long as life itself. I may live this many a day, for I am strong, and I have not been put into these murdering mills; but it will be like that old pear-tree in Mr. Barlow's orchard, at home, that the lightning struck when we were children. It stays there, with life in it, but it has few leaves, and no blossoms: when all the other trees look gay in spring, it is a dark, melancholy thing, unlike all around it. I shall be like that tree, Helen, when you are gone."

"Not so, Richard. You will bear much fruit, to the glory of God who has planted you in his garden; and to the support and comfort of those that are left." Richard shook his head; James remarked, "It will be a storm indeed, but not to blast you, Richard, as the lightning did the pear-tree's branches. Don't you remember what is written—'Every branch in me that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.' This is what will be done for you."

"Nobody wants it more, Jem. I thought myself a bit better than others about me; but since I came here I have found out such wicked, rebellious, impatient, angry passions in my heart, that I hardly believe myself so good as a heathen."

"Well, I cannot deny that the factory system is one of the worst and cruellest things ever invented to pamper the rich at the expense of the poor. It fattens them and melts the flesh off our bones: it clothes them in grand raiment, and bids us shiver in our rags: it brings all indulgences within their reach, and kills the industrious creatures whose toil provides them: but even in the factory, Richard, God's own people are yet his care: he makes all things still work together for good to them. I say, and I don't say it in anger but in grief, that the mill-work has shortened Helen's life—it has murdered her," he added, crimsoning with emotion: "and that will be declared at the judgment-seat, before all the angels of God, not only as to our Helen, but thousands and thousands more; and many a soul it has

sealed up in sin, before casting the poor body into the grave. But to her it has only been the brightening of future glory; and to you, Richard, who best understand her value, it will be a chastening, not for the present joyous but grievous, very grievous, but afterwards yielding the peaceable fruit of righteousness. We all want subduing; and a heart-break like this will wean you from the world more than any thing else would."

Richard could not answer; he buried his face in his brother's pillow, and wept.

Alas! many such a blight on young affections is daily falling through that most inhuman system, where no such Christian principle exists to sanctify the visitation. Many a young man sees the desire of his eyes taken away, as with a stroke; and while the vacancy in the mill is presently filled up from among the starving hundreds who press to barter their lives for bread, the bereaved bosom aches beneath the sense of a void that cannot be filled. Then comes the hour of sore temptation, when the gin-shop, the low gambling-house, the licentious revel proffer their treacherous solace, and the house that should have been a sanctuary of wedded love becomes the filthy den of a heartless drunkard—the rendezvous of all that is vile—a habitation for devils. On the one hand the great enemy of man leads on the votaries of wealth into a golden snare, and many hurtful lusts that drown them in destruction and perdition; on the other he drives the poor and needy into desperate crimes, either as a set-off against the miseries they cannot avoid, or as an expected means of improving their wretched condition. In no light can the matter be honestly viewed, without a secret consciousness that the curse of heaven is upon it; and better it were for England that her commercial greatness were annihilated, and her place among the nations not that of a Queen but of a vassal, than that in her skirts should be found the blood of so many poor innocents as she yearly sacrifices at the shrine of her transient prosperity.

But would such loss and degradation follow on the abandonment of this system? Far from it. The true greatness of our country has ever consisted in the superiority of her humblest classes over those of

other lands. The independence of an English labourer is as proverbial as his industry: and now that this is becoming, through the money-loving greediness of the few, grinding down the poverty-stricken faces of the rapidly increasing many, a mere name without a reality, so also will the strength of England be. An unnatural state of things, wholly foreign to the old-English character, is transforming "a bold peasantry, their country's pride," into a degraded, discontented, restless, reckless, turbulent mob. Two classes, hitherto bound together by mutual interest and mutual respect, are daily becoming more opposed the one to the other. We may close our eyes to the inevitable consequences, appalling even as concerns present things alone; but no such wilful blindness to the evil will either quench its existence or arrest its course. If those who alone have power to do so refuse to listen, we cannot help it; but as we must all expect to be buried in the ruin they are bringing on the country, it is no less our duty to lift the voice of remonstrance, than it is theirs to regard that voice. If God gives over, alike the senators and the commercial classes among us to hardness of heart, we must bow beneath the trying dispensation: but one thing is certain—such hardness is of their own choosing; they can never cast off the responsibility that rests on them; and the curse that through their callousness smites the land, will lie, a fearful and an immovable weight, upon their own guilty souls for ever.

We return now to the tale, which, however needfully disguised as to persons and places, we can assure our readers is substantially correct in its leading particulars. To this, at least, the experience of all who are at all conversant in the cotton and other mill-works will bear testimony, that it very faintly shadows forth realities which have crossed their daily paths.

Helen Fleetwood was, as she had said, not a girl of robust make, or rude strength; but no tendency to a sickly habit had ever appeared in her constitution. The rapid effect of mill-labour upon it had led her to suspect some lurking unsoundness; but a little more experience and observation would have proved to her how short a resistance the stoutest frame could offer to the debilitating effects of the atmosphere

and other evils to which she was exposed throughout the live-long day. Neither could it be questioned that the mental sufferings which could not but await any modest, right-minded female in such society, had a very large share in undermining her bodily health. This is one of the worst features of mill-labour: those engaged in it are taken chiefly from amongst the lowest class, and being occupied in the work at a time when education should be forming the character, there is seldom any power of resistance provided against the flood of iniquity that always deepens and widens in proportion to the number of human beings congregated together. Accustomed to associate with vice in all its shapes, while the natural corruption of the heart finds a congenial element in whatsoever is opposed to holiness, what can be expected but that out of so much evil treasure evil things should be perpetually poured? The absence of all moral restraint, so far as a master's authority is concerned, fosters the mischief: it is true any noisy disturbance is punishable; but nothing short of that is taken cognizance of; there is no protection for the ear of female modesty, against all that can outrage it; and the hatred borne by female depravity against its opposite, is too well authenticated to leave a doubt that the very discovery of one among them who abhors such proceedings, will ever stimulate the vile to do their worst. This had been the great ordeal to Helen, who, shining still like gold in the furnace, found its heat well nigh insupportable. She felt herself in a manner degraded, from being the unwilling but helpless witness to so much infamous language, accompanied as it will always be by conduct no less abandoned; and contrasted with the purity in which she had ever been shielded under the eye of her parental friend, it seemed a removal into the abode of evil spirits. She longed to escape it; she pined for deliverance: and this grief of heart preyed on her life to an extent that soon defied all human skill to stay the progress of decay. The blasphemy that abounded was awful; not only profane cursing and swearing was heard on every trivial occasion, but deliberate scoffing at God's name and word, infidel jests, atheistical arguments, were frequently uttered:

and such discourse as earth alone can furnish; for surely in hell they cannot deny the terrific power that wreathes the burning chain around them. Weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth are there; but the voice of impious defiance is silenced; for there, in a revelation of wrath indescribable as it is unappeasable, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

Lately a new and an almost unutterable curse had been added to those already felt in the mills. A man of whom it is hard to think otherwise than as of an actual incarnation of Satan, had been among them personally, and had circulated by his delegates a vast deal of his infernal doctrine in that and other manufacturing districts. It will suffice to say that some half dozen of the young men in that mill had become Socialists. Beyond this it was impossible to go—Socialism is the *ne plus ultra* of six thousand years' laborious experience on the part of the great enemy of man—it is the moral Gorgon upon which whomsoever can be compelled to look must wither away: it is the doubly denounced woe upon the inhabitants of earth—the last effort of Satanic venom wrought to the madness of rage by the consciousness of his shortened time. It is a known, a vaunted fact, that a large contribution was raised to provide a plentiful supply of the most horrible publications, for the express use of the young factory-labourers, and to engage effective distributors, that no opportunity might be lost; and Helen Fleetwood had been doomed to hear some of the discourse of the wretched converts to this refinement of all blasphemous iniquity. She had, however, succeeded in partially putting down this outrage on behalf of herself, and a few companions who were not wholly lost; she compelled them to join her in a solemn declaration that they would lay a public complaint before the Messrs. Z. by means of the newspaper, if any more was said in their hearing on the subject: and the aggressors seeing them in earnest, and conscious that the mill-owners must in that case take it up, thought it prudent to desist. This spirited proceeding had rallied a little party around Helen; but they, too, frequently turned and reproached her for the petty persecution to which they were exposed by having upheld her in her squeamish notions.

What harm, they asked, could a little talk do? They were not going to turn heathens themselves; they believed in God, though those foolish fellows laughed at his name; and in the Bible, though they constantly tried to prove it the vilest book ever written; but now they had made themselves enemies, and all to please her. Helen bore it patiently, as incomparably the least of two evils; and to one or two who seemed more in earnest in their protestations, she tried to show the duty of keeping aloof from all evil communication; but this trial was by far the severest of all that she had to encounter, while continual sorrow oppressed her heart for those among whom she saw the diabolical doctrines gradually spreading, to the utter ruin of body and soul.

What marvel, then, that Helen Fleetwood should rapidly sink under these things? Human nature, as she had recently been forced to see it in the mills, presented to her view an aspect so frightful, that even the companions of her early days seemed to her to rest under some heretofore undiscovered blot; and she often sighed to flee away and to be at rest among the disembodied spirits of the redeemed. James alone, standing as he did on the extreme verge of mortal existence, with heart and hope already fixed in heaven, was an object of unshrinking regard to the poor harassed girl; and even as she looked on Richard's honest countenance, beaming with integrity, with manly sincerity, and godly simplicity, the thought arose to repel the yearnings of innocent affection towards the dear playmate of her infancy. "If he was brought among those blaspheming profligates, what a wretch might he soon become!" She had continual heaviness and sorrow of heart, for those around her in the mill; and at home she marked the growth of evil dispositions in the children from whom during hours of work she was usually separated. These were the things that barbed the shaft of disease, striking her tender frame through exhausting labour in unwholesome air; and she felt the effects too powerfully to entertain an expectation, even had she desired it, of deriving benefit from any change that would have affected the body only.

But Helen Fleetwood was not one of

those impatient characters who having obtained, through faith, a good hope for eternity, desire to cheat their Master of their poor services here, and would grasp at the crown the moment the cross presses on them. She had no desire to escape its farther endurance, except as a compulsory intercourse with the wicked at times burdened her conscience with a dread of being counted a partaker in their guilt. When a mind keenly alive to the sanctity of God's name and word, has become the involuntary receptacle of blasphemous thoughts uttered by others, the merely mechanical act of memory, apart from all volition, bringing them suddenly forward, perhaps when engaged in the very act of worship, will smite the soul with a pang that none can conceive but those who have experienced it; nay, the very effort to forget will imprint the abhorred idea more legibly on the brain. Exposed to all manner of evil communication, though Helen's good manners were not corrupted, nor her principles in the smallest degree shaken by it, still the defilement was felt; and as the severity of temptation becomes more bitterly trying in proportion to the holiness of the mind that encounters it, to her it was exceedingly terrible. She had learned to practise a greater degree of abstraction than her naturally quick and observant habits would seem to have admitted: it was by continuing in secret, ejaculatory prayer, by speaking to herself in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in her heart unto the Lord, that she contrived to shut out a great deal of what others drank in with contented if not with greedy ear; but the relief was partial, the trial perpetual, increasing, and often wholly unavoidable. Yet, occasionally, when emboldened to speak to some of her more immediate associates in labour, she had marked the operations of the hands suspended, and the eye turned with inquiry, not unmixed with anxiety, to her face: and one such instance in a day would send her home resigned to endure for any length of time the trial of her own precious faith, if so she might be made instrumental in leading the poorest, the vilest, the most despised of her class to seek the same mercy. This is Christian principle in its highest, noblest exercise; to stifle self, where self craves spiritual privileges and separation from

the wicked; in order to exhibit before others the light that may conduct them into ways of holiness and peace.

But what shall we say to this black feature in the factory system? Its existence in the mills generally is too notorious to be denied: no guard is set, no watch is kept, no thought is taken, where the morals of the labourers are concerned. It is to the manufacturing districts that evil men, as to a hot-house, repair to sow the seeds that they desire to see ripening into blasphemy and sedition. The Beast of Socialism fails not indeed to stalk over our fields, and to lay in wait for unwary stragglers among the rural population; but it is in the manufacturing towns he nestles, and builds around him huge trophies with the bones of his slain. There the Chartist is taught secretly to whet his pike, and there the blight of Popery noiselessly spreads, sealing up in a false, fatal peace such souls as may not be prepared to enter into open league with hell. And against this host of destroyers with what armour does the instructed, the loyal, the professedly church-going master provide his poor ignorant dependents? The toil in which they engage for his advantage, lays them especially open to evil influence, while it debars them from the acquirement of necessary information on matters where to be ignorant is to perish. True, there are not many of Helen Fleetwood's stamp to be wounded unto death by the hearing of what those men would not suffer their own daughters to hear for the wealth, perhaps, of all England's commercial hoards: but there are hundreds and thousands daily yielding to the torrent of iniquity that sweeps through the scene of their insipid toil, glad of any excitement to awaken their drowsy spirits, running the short quick course of unbridled sin, and early dropping off into unnoticed graves. Yes, ye thoughtless holders of these treasures of immortal souls, your dead are quickly buried out of your sight, and speedily forgotten; but do they not live, to greet you when the earth discloses her blood, and no more covers her slain; and when, in reference not merely to the perished body, but to the writhing souls for ever cut off from life, for ever doomed to conscious unutterable interminable death, a voice you

cannot close your ear against, asks in thunder the awful question, "WHO SLEW ALL THESE?"

CHAPTER XXI.

FARTHER EFFORTS.

A TEMPESTUOUS night of wind and rain had roughened the landscape where now the autumnal sun, still powerful in heat and brilliancy, threw a mantle of light as he ascended from the verge of ocean, whose agitated swell told of a recent tumult amongst those sparkling waves. The sounds that rose upon his ear seemed sounds of welcome to the dejected traveller, but found no echo in his bosom. He was weighed down by a sadness that would not yield to any cheering influence, and the recognition that every step compelled him to make, of some object identified with his dearest, fondest recollections, was but the repetition of a secret pang. Richard Green was changed, wholly changed, as regarded his relationship to the things about him. Once they had been numbered as so many future accessories to the happiness of which his young heart loved to dream; now they were tormenting remembrancers of that dream which he almost at times longed to forget, but to which he still clung, as a mother to the corpse of her only babe. He moved with a gait as heavy as formerly it was lightsome; and, when the gardener's lodge first caught his eye, by the Squire's gate, his head was instantly averted, as from some unwelcome spectre; but as quickly turned again, with the steadfast resolution to master his feelings, or rather to annihilate them. He passed on, left his packet of letters at the house of the gentleman whose envoy he had been, and then bent his steps towards the parsonage.

Mr. Barlow was an early riser, and according to Richard's calculation, would have finished his morning meal; but some business had detained him, and when the summons came to enter the study, he appeared seated at his comfortable breakfast, a well-worn Bible open beside him, and all the

placid animation of his character beaming from a countenance that none could look on without loving him.

"Welcome Richard, my good lad, your punctuality delights me; I can well guess it cost you something to bid farewell so soon; but, my dear boy, the path of duty is usually a path of self-denial. You look fatigued too, and not by any means well. Come, sit down with me, take a bit of toast and a cup of warm cocoa; it will refresh you."

Richard obeyed, so far as to seat himself on the opposite side of the table, but not a word escaped his compressed lips. The pastor saw that a severe struggle was going on within, and turning back to the preceding page of his book, remarked, "I may as well give you a share in better things while offering a portion of the meat that perisheth; hear what a comfortable passage has presented itself to me this morning;" and he read the fourteenth of Hosea. Coming to the 3d verse he repeated, "In thee the fatherless findeth mercy," and looking up, observed, "That promise is yours, and those who are now, as I well judge, present to your thought, even as though they sat beside us."

Richard made an attempt to speak, but the hoarse sound was inarticulate; and Mr. Barlow, after one more anxious look in his face, finished the chapter.

"And now, Richard, drink your cocoa."

The effort to swallow was successful, though so strong as to crimson the youth's face, and to swell every vein in his forehead. This was succeeded by another conquest, for he spoke, and in a voice though tremulous, yet so calm and clear, that it rather surprized Mr. Barlow, who was prepared for a burst of emotion.

"I humbly ask your pardon, sir, for not speaking directly. Something came over me at first, but it's gone, quite gone."

"And now tell me how you found and how you left them all."

"I found them, sir, in great poverty: my grandmother changed, as if by twenty years; Jem dying, and the rest—in the factory."

He spoke the last three words with an expression such as Mr. Barlow had never before seen on his countenance: then after a short pause resumed,

"I left them, sir, much as I found them,

only Jem was a great deal nearer death; and Helen given over."

"Given over!—Helen!—with what fever?"

"Oh, no, sir; no fever but that fever of heart and soul, that dries up, as it were, the poor body when it is worked and worked, to death—the death of the factories."

"Richard, you astonish, you shock me. I would rather see you in all the agony of unrestrained sorrow than with that unnatural expression. Tears would be preferable to it."

"You'll see no tears on my cheek, Mr. Barlow: I've cried them all out, and I'll cry no more, but be a man; as well I need, to bear all I've got laid upon me."

A little soothing persuasion soon led the poor boy to a full disclosure of what had befallen the family; while the unrestrained sympathy, and still more perhaps the undisguised indignation of his hearer, ministered a balm to his spirit that he could not resist. He went on to expatiate, and leaning his elbow on the little table, his cheek on his hand, forgetful of all the respectful distance that he had always observed, he told, with melancholy composure, the tale of his youthful hopes and anticipations, with their sudden blight; ending with, "And so, as you'll never be called on to marry us, Mr. Barlow, I can only hope it might be allowed her to come here alive, that you might bury her."

The kind-hearted minister wept outright, and Richard, looking at him with gratified feeling, said, "I should like to cry too, sir; but somehow, I can't."

"My poor boy, this is a heavy dispensation. Oh, what have they to answer for who laid this cruel snare in the harmless path of the widow and the fatherless? Kneel down with me, Richard; we have one Friend able and willing to succour, and to save to the uttermost." He poured forth a most touching supplication, such as, a few days before, would have melted Richard; but though the "Amen" was breathed from his inmost heart, he rose collected and tearless as ever. In answer to farther enquiries, he said,

"Mary and Willy may be got out of the vile mills at last; but you see, sir, Jem will hardly live through the week;

granny can't hold out very long, she is so broke down; and Helen, they tell me, will fail all at once, and go away like a wreath of smoke. Ay," he added, with sudden animation, "and she'll go, like smoke, upwards; and when we lose sight of her she'll be mingled with the sky. That's a comforting thought, sir."

Deeply affected, Mr. Barlow grasped his hand, and bidding him be sure to return to him in the evening, took his hat, to search out his friend the doctor.

This gentleman's feelings were excited to so high a pitch that he ejaculated a hope he should not fall in with Stratton, till he had time to cool. Then said, "Let Green write immediately a cheering account of his safe arrival, and enclose a note from me, which Helen must take to her doctor. At least, I'll find out whether returning here might not save her."

The note was written, sent, delivered, and answered with equal candor and skill: the case was at least hopeless; and the removal impracticable: for, as the writer observed, the violence done to her feelings in separating her from those to whom she was so strongly bound, would speedily finish the work which no human means were likely to arrest in its quiet but rapid course.

A few days more brought a letter from Helen herself to Mr. Barlow, requesting him to break as gently as might be, to Richard, the tidings it conveyed. She went on—"We expected it too long to be unprepared, but it is a sore stroke too: and yet, honoured sir, if you were here, looking at the sweet smile upon his pale, cold face, you would say death is more beautiful than life. James talked of you, and prayed for you to the last; and said he should be in your crown of rejoicing at that day. He said if you knew the value of but one soul, as nothing but a dying bed could teach you, that you would think a whole life's labour well spent even to gather in the soul of a poor little boy like him. Oh, sir, it must be terrible to feel the world sliding away, as it were, from under one's feet, and the fiery pit standing open beneath, and nothing to catch hold of to keep one from falling into it. Our James saw it all, and he said things that I cannot tell you exactly, for he used finer words than I can

repeat, and we wondered where he got them; but the meaning was, that all this only made him feel how close he was held within the arms of the Lord Jesus; so that though earth might pass from under him, and hell open before him, he could not feel fear, for he was in no danger. I humbly crave your prayers, honoured sir, that when my time comes, which is not long, I may be as happy as James was, and as little afraid; but if not as happy, I hope I shall be as safe as he; for the same God is my God, and the same Saviour is my Saviour; and the same light will guide me through the dark valley of the shadow of death to the place where sorrow and sighing flee away."

Mr. Barlow having taken a copy of this letter, gave the original to Richard, rightly judging it contained a prospective no less than a present consolation for the poor youth, who, deeply humbled under the afflicting rod, went softly and sorrowfully about his daily work, uncomplaining, but evidently broken-hearted. One day, some weeks after this event, he was surprised at his employment by the doctor, who, approaching with the look of a man intent on a benevolent object, said, "Green, I know you will be glad to hear that business of an unexpected nature calls me within a few miles of M. where I mean to go, and to devote a day or two entirely to your family. Such an opening must not be neglected; and I want to consult you as to the plan to be pursued."

Richard leaned on his spade, and fixed his sparkling eyes on the speaker, as if anxious for some farther confirmation of what seemed too good to be true.

"It cannot be denied," pursued the doctor, "that your grandmother was unfairly dealt with through the artifices of a strange man, who found but too ready a co-operation here. We must take the laws as we find them, our duty is to submit, for the Lord's sake to every ordinance of man; but when we see a legal enactment stretched to the extent of oppressing the poor, it becomes the duty of every Christian to assist his afflicted fellow-subjects in bearing a burden that we cannot remove from their shoulders. I have tried my utmost at the vestry, but all I can obtain is a conditional promise that any member of the family who may be found wholly

unable to labour, shall be admitted, to—
to”——

“To the work-house, sir,” interrupted Richard, quietly.

“Yes: there is no alternative: it would not be impossible to find those among our gentry who might contribute to render the short time of your excellent grandmother’s remaining years comfortable in a humble home; but the long-sighted parochial policy of some persons is opposed to this: they argue that private charity is subject to personal caprice; and that the temporary relief thus given at once to her necessities and to their funds, might end in throwing her at last upon them, while it held out present encouragement to others to make the same experiment of return, and so inundate them with claimants.”

Richard was silent: and his friend continued: “I feel it is almost cruel to speak thus to you, but as you are a sensible young fellow, and one who habitually seeks guidance from above, it is right you should exactly understand the case.”

“It is better that I should do so, sir, and I thank you the more for it. If I understand rightly, the parish is willing to take my granny into the work-house, but will do nothing for the others.”

“Just so; and if we persist in opposing them, it will be at the expense of a quarrel, when all has hitherto gone on well through the good-will subsisting among us. Mr. Stratton, you know, holds office now; and he is very positive.”

“The aggressor seldom forgives the injured person,” remarked Richard.

“But what say you to the proposal?”

“Why, sir, I say I can’t help wondering that a man so sharp in those matters should not know, or should not remember, or should not tell you all, that Richard Green’s daily earnings can feed two mouths; and that while he has strength to do this—he raised the spade a little, and struck it forcibly into the earth up to the very handle—“his grandmother need not depend either on public or private charity for a shelter and a meal.”

“My dear lad, there was one present at the meeting who answered for you that such would be your feeling, and more than one who asserted that you would act up to it; but to this it was objected that other

ties might soon press on you, and the charge of a growing family leave you without the means, however strong your inclination might be, to provide for your aged parent.”

“Then, doctor, the gentlemen did me wrong,” said Richard, in whose bosom sorrow seemed struggling against sterner emotions.

“You have too much of the old English character about you for these altered times, my honest friend.”

“But, sir, we are free-born men; and if I choose to take my grandmother to live with me, and work for her and myself, without being chargeable to any, is there any law to hinder me?”

“Let me ask you, in return, are you able to do so?”

Richard hung his head: he was still very young, though large and strong for his age; and in a place where labourers were more plentiful than work, except at some seasons of the year, he could not calculate on a sufficiency for housekeeping. The doctor observed him for a moment, and resumed. “It is right I should tell you that the squire, by whom you are far better paid than you would be elsewhere, is on the prudent side in this business, and would not encourage your plan.”

This was a sad blow; for Richard had just recollected the advantages to be expected by continuing in that gentleman’s service and favour. He shook his head despondingly, and looked at the doctor.

“Well, in the present stage of the business we will decide nothing. My visit to M. will enable me better to judge of the case, as regards the family; and I promise you to make enquiry into every thing, and to do what I can towards improving their condition and prospects.”

“Oh, sir, I have nothing but thanks”——

“And those you can keep till I have done something to deserve them. Meanwhile, get ready any thing you wish to send, and pray for a blessing on my journey.”

A few days saw the kind-hearted doctor shivering within his comfortable surtout, among the uncongenial chills of a foggy atmosphere in M. He made his way to the place described by Richard, but the objects of his search were not there; and with some difficulty he traced them to a

yet more miserable locality, where the broken floor of their narrow apartment lay level with the street, and damp were oozing and shining in the sickly blaze of a few sticks over which the widow was stirring a little meal-broth. The pot very nearly fell from her hands, as she turned round at the well-remembered tones of a voice that had often cheered the bed of sickness in a far different abode; and when that hand was kindly taken, and the voice that greeted her grew tremulous from emotion, at beholding her altered appearance, she sank into her chair, and wept and sobbed most piteously.

A few drops of cordial mixture, considerably provided, the very flavour of which had the sweetness of home upon it, assisted her to overcome this burst of a feeling too strong for her debilitated frame; and a gladness not to be repressed brightened her spirit as she felt the reality of that most cheering sunshine of life—the presence of a true, an old, a sympathizing friend.

Richard's health and welfare were the first objects discussed: then followed the mention of James.

"Ah, sir," said the widow, "it ought to stifle every murmur of my unfaithful heart, to recollect what I saw in that precious child. His departure was as if the gate of heaven had been for a moment set open before me, that I might catch a glimpse of the glories within."

"And has it been blessed to the others?"

"One of them, sir, is as ripe for heaven as he was: the two children I can hardly judge of, for the long hours of work, and the poverty and sickliness they are brought to, seem so to freeze them up, that at home they seldom speak, and I cannot always bear to rouse the poor things from the sleepy state that they are in."

"You have removed from the lodging Richard left you in."

"Yes, we found it too expensive; and the landlord persisting in it that we had means of our own, threatened to raise the rent: besides, going up and down stairs is a trial to Helen, and I was glad to spare her a few steps. We are nearer the street, and nearer the mill too; and oh, sir, I do hope I may say that every new step in the valley of humiliation brings me nearer to God."

"You have his presence: and what are the world's riches to that?"

"Or the world's poverty either, sir, which some count a blessing in itself. But there is as much pride among the poor as among the rich, and I needed to be taught that. I knew I wanted daily sanctifying: but I did not know I wanted daily humbling. He who knew it ordered it for me; and truly I never so rejoiced in Him before falling from what was in my own mind a little height among my equals, as now I do when I seem to have reached the bottom, and have grace to be there contented."

"If such is your experience," remarked the doctor, "those who regard you must learn to look more contentedly upon this very great reverse in your circumstances; but I fear the children cannot view it in so happy a light."

"Ah, sir, I spoke selfishly. Had I taken that rash step with a single thought of bettering our condition for my own sake, or with any other intention than to benefit them, I should indeed be most wretched now: but their interest was all I had at heart, and that spares me an aggravation of the self-reproach that I must always feel on their account."

"How are they going on?"

"Helen is sinking fast; but nothing can persuade her to leave off mill-work. Since she became so ill, two or three of the girls who formerly tormented her have softened very much, and even appear to seek the pious instruction that she is so anxious to give. This, and the determination to help while she can, make her proof against all persuasion to give over; and your visit, sir, just at this time, is a providential thing, for you can judge of her case, and can also influence her to act as you see best."

"And what of my lively little friend Mary?"

"She has been too long a factory-child, sir, to deserve any more the name of lively."

"I have been told the work has a very depressing effect on those engaged in it."

"It has many bad effects, sir, and that is one. You are aware that I have, by the divine blessing, brought up my family in the ways of godliness. I could not impart to the dear children a new nature,

nor spiritualize their minds; but I have been careful to accustom them to religious exercises and profitable discourse, waiting for the blessing that alone can give the increase, when we have sown and watered. Well, sir, our evenings at home were very pleasant; and I always found the children able to take an interest in scripture stories, asking questions, listening to my remarks, and making some themselves. But now, with Helen to help me, and with the blessed experience and dying testimony of dear James so fresh in their memories, they can seldom seem even decently attentive to what I feel bound to say; and neither the most beautiful Bible histories, nor Helen's delightful way of explaining things to them, will keep them listening. They are heavy and sullen, except when they talk to one another in a way that grieves me; telling silly tales, making ill-natured speeches about their companions, and repeating idle jests, often not fit to repeat; besides all that passes in whispers, and which no doubt is worse. It seems as if the weariness brought on by the dull, but fatiguing work, required something to remove it, more exciting to the bad feelings than engaging to the mind. Oh, sir, I fear these mills are slaughter-houses to the poor little lambs of the flock!"

"Take courage, my good Mrs. Green: remember that of Christ's own flock the weakest lamb shall never perish, neither shall any be able to pluck it out of his hand."

"True, sir, I do remember it: but it is a grievous thing to see what sorrows are being laid up in this life even for those who will not be actually lost, through the dreadful wickedness of such places. We are commanded to order our own households according to godliness—to bring up children in the way they should go—and it is a bitter thing to me to reflect that this handful of meal which I am making into a little mess for their supper, was bought at the price of their health, both of body and mind; at the price of their contentedness, at the price of their modesty, and, for aught I know, at the price of their souls."

"I can fully comprehend your distress, my poor friend. I came here, sincerely anxious to render you service, and I will strive so to do. This evening when your

young people return, you must have a little treat in readiness, by way of establishing, or rather of reviving my popularity among them; and I will drop in, and take a full survey of the party so often interesting to me in better days."

He shook her hand kindly, left a piece of money in it, and departed.

The doctor was not only a benevolent but a very energetic man. His decided temper, and fearless advocacy of what he knew to be right, had often turned the tide when it seemed to set in unfavourably for the interests of the poor in his extensive district. A Christian philanthropist will be a blessing in any department; but perhaps in none so effectually as the medical line. The widow Green perfectly understood his character, and a ray of hope brightened her earthly prospect as she looked upon this bold honest servant of her Master, sent, as it appeared, to her succour. Railroad communication, though far advanced, had not as yet thrown open a path for rapid travelling between the neighbourhood of L. and the place that she then inhabited: tedious journeys by stage-coaches must be encountered: and this rendered a visit from him so utterly improbable, that she had never even imagined such an event. With a thankful heart she hastened to provide the unusual refreshment of a substantial meal for the young labourers, and invested her miserable hovel with as comfortable an aspect as it could be made to wear.

When the doctor paid his evening visit, it cost him an effort to suppress the feeling of mingled sorrow and indignation excited by the changed aspect of his favorite cottagers. Although still a young man, he had been settled in L. long enough to have attended the death-beds of their parents, and to watch their own growth from infancy. Mary's frank character, and her sprightly ways, had often amused him; and on Helen he looked as the very beau ideal of an English village maiden. He had secretly pleased himself with the probability of her some day repaying to Richard, in particular, the kindness bestowed on her helpless childhood. He was prepared to witness great ravages on her blooming appearance, but the wan spectre that smiled upon him in all the

unrestrained gladness of a heart-warm welcome—could that be Helen Fleetwood? A bright fire and a good-sized candle threw their mingled light upon her bent and emaciated but still graceful figure; and the total absence of colour from her cheek, when the hectic of pleasure faded, the apparent enlargement of the sparkling eye, and swell of the pallid lip, all opened to him at one glance a page in her history that showed how nearly the brief tale was ended.

Near her sat Mary, her pretty wild curls confined in a stiff braid, set round the crown of her head with an attempt at smartness. Her long arms bony and bare, and her general air that of a person who is conscious of having greatly outgrown the expectations of the spectator. Grown, indeed, the poor child was, but more in the knowledge of evil than either in wisdom, or in stature. She had established the reputation of one who was not to be put down by ordinary means; and this character she looked very legibly. The doctor thought her more painfully changed than Helen. Willy, who had seriously endeavoured to fulfil his promises to Richard, and thereby exposed himself to ridicule and persecution, had effected a sort of compromise with his conscience, openly running in the way of his evil companions, but secretly protesting against it. The dying admonitions of his brother had sensibly affected him, and a very marked change for the better had followed on his departure; but Mary seemed bent on not allowing him to outrun her in the right path, and by exercising the influence that seniority and a dictatorial spirit gave her over him, she effectually kept his better feelings in check. This produced a heavy, downcast look, occasionally varied by one of sly enquiry, as to whether he was observed. The poor child was indeed suffering a conflict that no one suspected: for he fondly loved Richard, and deeply felt the solemnity of the pledge he had given him, and found his conscience much awakened; yet, lacking courage to open his mind to his grandmother or Helen, he quailed before Mary's power, aided by that of the evil examples around him; and was in the condition of one who, desiring to reach a distant object, yet allows himself to be pulled back

by what he had not boldness to resist. Such a case is frequently known in the experience of more matured years; but it occurs among children oftener than is suspected, and often is the tender bud of early promise blighted through the neglect of those who leave it exposed to the rough blast, the nipping frost, or the parching ray.

The doctor took but a cursory view of poor little Willy, and withdrew his eye, satisfied that he was changed into a sullen, stupid child. All his interest became centered in Helen, whose natural rustic reserve seemed to have given place not to the acquired boldness of a town-life, but to the expansion of a spirit about to wing its way to the company of the redeemed in heaven, and to embrace in one wide grasp the whole church, as well militant as triumphant. She answered all enquiries as to her bodily health with a simple assurance that she endured little pain, but felt herself, she said, melting away, like a snow-ball. When asked why she did not discontinue her labours, and devote the little time that might remain to preparation for the great change, she raised her eyes to the enquirer's face, and meekly asked, "What preparation, sir?"

"Why, it is a solemn thing to be expecting a summons into the immediate presence of God; and should not the spirit be composed by meditation and prayer into a frame suited for such transition?"

"I am not enough of a scholar, sir, to answer you rightly, and perhaps I am wrong in my notion, too; but I do think that all our sufficiency being of Christ, who also himself makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, we can have no better preparation for the change that is coming, than to be diligent in such work as he gives us to do, even to the last moment."

"But, Helen, is it not right to take a solemn review of our past lives, our past sins, our many short-comings, our unfaithfulness to God, our neglected opportunities, our abused privileges, and supplicate a total oblivion of them in the blood that cleanseth from all sins?"

"Doctor, I humbly hope that I do so, but at the same time I know that my thinking about my past sins will not help to

wash away their guilt. *That* is done already through faith in the Lord Jesus; and when I go to him I shall be always praising him for doing it, and surely I shall then remember how great my sins have been, that I may the more magnify the great love of my Redeemer in dying to save me from them! But should not I redeem the time that remains, and do as the Lord bade the man do out of whom he cast the devils;—that is, tell my friends what great things he has done for me?"

The doctor was puzzled; he had brought forward some of the commonplace discourse on a subject on which Helen was evidently clearer than himself. Instead of replying, he abruptly asked, "Would you like to die in the factory, Helen, surrounded by the profane who mock your hope?"

"Indeed, sir, if such were God's will I should like it exceedingly."

"Don't say so, my child!" cried the widow anxiously."

"We know very well, granny, that though one even came to them from the dead, they would not believe, if their hearts were not softened by the Holy Spirit; much less if one only departed this life before them; but such a thing might be blessed to some thoughtless soul, by his mercy; and I'm sure I don't know what could be more delightful in a dying hour than to think so."

Here Willy, almost unconsciously, exclaimed, "Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

"Doing what?" asked Mary in a sharp tone. The child blushed, and hung his head, muttering, "It was Jem said it."

This little incident was not lost on the doctor; but he only repeated in a low voice, "Who, then, is that faithful and wise servant?" "Well, Helen, I confess you have the best of the argument. He who with the talent given continues to trade and occupy till the Lord comes, is the object of that blessing. I will not seek to turn you from the path of usefulness; for you cannot spend your remnant of strength better than in promoting your Master's cause where, I fear, He is sorely dishonoured. And now, Mary, how are you occupying?"

"I mind my work, sir; I don't feel able

to preach like some others; but I set as good an example as I can."

"I am rejoiced to hear it, my dear; for, however little effect a good example alone may produce, still if you did otherwise, you would incur a terrible condemnation. Just before leaving L. I saw my dear cousin, your own kind teacher at the Sunday school, who charged me with many anxious inquiries about you. 'I never,' she said, 'took more pains with a child than with little Mary Green, and certainly none understood better the instructions given. She learned a great deal of scripture, and her answering proved that she thoroughly knew her duty to God and to her neighbour. I expect to hear on your return that Mary is a great blessing to the poor ignorant children about her. She is not afraid to speak her mind, and that is a great advantage where good treasure is lodged in the heart, and where there is such a very great need of its being constantly brought forth. I hope my Mary is quite a little missionary, as she often said she should like to be among those who are heathens in ignorance and sin.' So spoke my excellent cousin; and added that she prayed for you continually, trusting that you too lived in the habits of prayer for yourself, without which the intercession of friends was vain. Am I then to rejoice her affectionate heart by confirming all these pious hopes?"

Mary's face underwent many changes during this searching speech. He had struck a chord long silent in her bosom, and one that she did not expect would sound again. All eyes were fixed on her; the doctor's with a penetrating scrutiny peculiar to his character; the widow's and Helen's with tender anxiety; and those of Katy and Willy with mingled sympathy and curiosity. She made an attempt to look pert, but wholly failed; and at last with a half-sob exclaimed,

"If I have lost all the good I once got, they must answer for it who brought me here, and placed me among devils."

"Nay, Mary, the Lord says to the weakest of his children, however beset and however perplexed, 'My grace is sufficient for thee.' Can you tell me that you have daily, fervently, believingly, asked that grace and not received it?"

Mary's agitation increased. She said,

"If you want to save my soul, take me back to my teacher!"

"Your teacher, my poor child, can do no more than direct you to the great Teacher above, to whom you have already learned the way. There is no need to take you back, to find access to him; for he dwells no less beneath this roof than in the Sunday school at home."

He continued to speak in the same strain, Mary now weeping, now justifying her falling off: but evidently very much affected by his calm, firm language.

An interruption occurred by the sudden entrance of Charles Wright, who, without any preface, told the widow that his sister Sarah was very near death, and wanted to see her and Helen. Then added with a flushed face, "She has some fancy or other, and insists on your bringing a third person, not related to the family. Hudson would do, she says; but he lives so far off."

The widow looked at her guest, who instantly said, "As a medical man, no less than as a friend, I may be useful; shall I go?"

Charles cast a rapid glance over him, and replied. "If you please, sir; not that a doctor can now be of any use; but she is impatient poor thing, and we can't deny the request of her dying breath." He hurried out, evidently in great agitation; and the widow throwing on herself and Helen the slight additional covering they possessed, led the way towards her daughter's house.

"I wish," thought the doctor, as he closely followed them, "I could change this luxurious surtout into a cloak to throw over the shoulders of that dying girl. Rather ought I to wish that the mantle of her active zealous spirit might descend on me, when she is taken hence, that I too may be found, like her, not only watching but working when my Lord cometh."

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUSION.

THE chamber of death into which our nocturnal visitors entered from the dark and dreary street, looked bright. Charles

had run home, with the welcome intelligence that the witness whom Sarah had insisted on summoning was a perfect stranger, and a doctor likewise. Preparations were made accordingly, things righted; and the mother ready with a burst of suitable feeling to welcome her own aged parent, whose very existence she seemed of late to have forgotten. Thanks for her ready appearance, and regrets for calling her out at such an unsuitable hour, were mingled with lamentations about her dying child; but little heed was given, as the party drew near the bed where Sarah's mutilated form lay dreadfully convulsed, her cries every now and then ringing through the room. The doctor threw of his surtout, and inwardly grieving that Helen should be exposed to so agitating a scene, did all in his power to facilitate the poor girl's recovery from what he saw was but a temporary struggle of departing life.

The convulsions ceased; she asked for drink, and in a voice of surprising clearness, desired her brother to raise and support her. Then looking at the stranger, asked who he was.

"Our own kind doctor from L. my love," answered the widow. "One who has tended us all in sickness, and soothed the dying pillow of some, with the blessed consolations of the gospel of Christ."

"God reward you for it," said the dying girl, turning her large eyes full upon him. "Ay, he is going to reward you this minute: listen to me, for I have more words to speak than breath to utter them with."

"Speak gently, then, my dear girl, and we will listen," replied the doctor: for he was not one of the class, too numerous, who would bid the full heart of the dying repress its utterance on the score of thereby retaining its pulsation a few seconds longer.

"I am a factory girl, crippled, and wounded as you see to death, though not all at once, in the cruel mills; but that would be a small thing if the poor body alone had suffered. My soul was in ignorance and sin when I entered the mills, and became ten times more sinful while there."

"I'm sure," whimpered Mrs. Wright, "though we had no preaching ways among us," —

Sarah looked at Charles, who in a stern, stifled tone said, "Mother, you know my promise: anybody trying to interrupt her shall be put out of the room."

"I left the mills," pursued Sarah, "the miserable object you see, and drew on a painful existence without the knowledge that there was hope for the poor sinner—nay, without knowing that I was sinful, or that God was holy, or that heaven had a mansion for the penitent wretch. I haven't strength to tell you what *she* did for my soul," nodding her head towards Helen; "my dear grandmother, and the blessed boy that's gone, gave me much instruction; but it was her conduct, while suffering dreadful, cruel things for my sake, that convinced me there was more than words could tell in the faith they all held. I was led to Christ by it; I was taught to cling to him through *every* trial, of *every* kind, and I have found Him the faithful and true Witness that He says He is. But I have a sister; one who is gone astray openly; and no wonder, for she hated the Gospel, and hated Helen for the Gospel's sake: and I have this brother now holding me in his arms—the kindest friend I have ever had, in attending to me; but he hated godliness and I am afraid he hates it still; and he confederated with Phœbe to wrong Helen, without really wishing her any harm; but only because, as the Psalm says, 'the wicked seeth the righteous, and seeketh occasion to slay him,' not because of any particular spite against the person, but because he can't bear the righteousness."

It was wonderful how calmly and firmly she spoke this, looking all the while with great tenderness in her brother's face, who returned her look without a shade of displeasure.

"The Lord will visit you, Charles: but whether to save or to destroy I cannot tell. You wronged Helen—now right her!"

She uttered the last words in a voice, and with a gesture that bespoke exultation. Charles cleared his throat, and still looking at her, said, "I've told you already, and I tell again, before these witnesses, I had no personal spite: Phœbe had plenty, and put me up to it; and I did it as much joking as not. We arn't so squeamish in the mills as in the country villages; and if Helen had taken more

to our ways, she might have got on well enough. All I know is that she never did, nor ever said a single thing that anybody could call wrong. She was righteous over-much, and that nettled us. She often gave me good advice, and I let her, because I wanted to put another face on the talking between us. So now are you satisfied?"

"Is Helen satisfied?" asked Sarah.

"Yes—oh, yes! quite enough has been said about it, and more than I wished: and now, dearest Sarah, compose yourself."

"I am composed, Helen: my mother must speak too, and say if she has any thing against you."

"I have nothing to say," muttered Mrs. Wright.

"Then sir," pursued Sarah, looking at the doctor, "you will bear witness that every thing ever said against Helen Fleetwood is confessed to be false by the persons who spoke it. I know she does not want this, for she looks up higher than anything man can say or think of her; but in case an unkind report ever gets about again, you are her witness. Now I have done with this world."

She closed her eyes; and Charles as he bent over her was heard to whisper, "Nobody ever shall say any one word against her: she is almost dying, poor thing!"

Sarah looked round; "Helen, come here; are you dying?"

"Not exactly that, dear: but I have a very short time to stay behind you; and I trust we shall meet in glory."

"Yes, in glory. I know it well, Helen, for the Lord Jesus is in glory, and he says to us, even to you and I, 'where I am there shall ye be also.' I never should have known that, only for your coming here; I was more ignorant than a beast; for they know the hand that feeds them, and I did not. Never leave off telling the sinful children and people in the mills what you told me. It may be forgot or not understood at the time; but something will happen to bring it to mind, perhaps when you are long dead, and souls will be saved."

Helen looked at the doctor, who nodded his head in acquiescence, and then asked Sarah if he should pray; she gratefully assented, and after a most solemn and

touching supplication, mingled with thanksgiving, in both of which she audibly joined, he told her to run with patience the very little that remained of her painful race, for that the prize was already within her grasp. A fond farewell, accompanied with fervent thanks, and expressions of great joy, was then bestowed by Sarah on the Widow and Helen; and they left her in the act of once more inviting her family to flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel.

"This was a striking scene," remarked the doctor, "and it teaches us a lesson of submission to many things that we consider hard. You were not led to this place by chance: the practices, unfair and cruel, that brought you from your native home were over-ruled for good. I rejoice in having been here, if only for poor Richard's sake."

The doctor had resolved in his own mind to avail himself of this incident, in introducing to one of the Messrs. Z. a representation he proposed making on behalf of the young people employed in their mill. The next morning saw him at the house where the poor widow had made her first, unsuccessful attempt. The high respectability of his connexions, some of whom were known to Mr. Z. ensured him a polite reception; and after some general conversation, he introduced the subject by asking if Mr. Z. recollected the names of Green and Fleetwood, as labourers in his establishment. Mr. Z. recollected them well; but it suited his convenience better to say that the names of his work-people were entered in the books, kept by his Agent; and into which he very rarely had occasion to look.

"They came to you," persisted the doctor, "from my district, at L. and brought a recommendation from my neighbour, Mr. Stratton, to you."

"Oh, yes, I remember—a pauper family, sent to relieve the parish of a burden. You did quite right—I believe Ferris gave you the first hint, eh?" and he smiled knowingly.

"I took no part in the proceeding, sir, except as regarded a deep interest in the whole family, whom I have known from my first professional outset. In fact, my present visit to M. is principally on their

account; and my calling on you entirely so."

Mr. Z. could only reply by a courteous bow: a gentleman among his equals must be the gentleman still. The doctor entered upon a brief outline of the story that to him was so touching; and his hearer listened with exemplary patience, even to the closing point of the last night's adventure. When the doctor paused, he spoke.

"Upon my word, a very interesting little history, and almost fit for a book. I am glad it has all ended so well; and no doubt you feel much gratified in being the bearer of such a vindication to the girl's former neighbourhood. We in large towns are perhaps somewhat lax in matters that are more strictly regarded in the country: 'tis a pity it should be so, but such is the universal experience. Have you seen the lions of M.—doctor? Can I be of service as an exhibitor?"

"Thank you, Mr. Z. but my time is too limited for sight-seeing. I would rather engage your benevolent feelings on behalf of my poor friends than tax your politeness, or intrude on your leisure."

"My feelings, I assure you, are greatly interested already, by your narrative: but how does that affect the case? I have no power to act, were it even requisite; and from your statement it seems the only wrong inflicted on your protégé has been already redressed. Of course it is wholly impossible that I should enter into the personal bickerings of some hundreds of people, just because it happens to be my money that they receive on a Saturday night instead of any other mill owner's."

"Certainly, that would be scarcely practicable; but in a case like this, where an innocent young girl has been persecuted to death's door, and where the wrong has been so publicly inflicted, so extensively connived at, a few words of admonition generally applied might produce an effect salutary to the whole establishment."

Mr. Z. smiled: "My good sir, we are peculiarly favoured on all sides by the gratuitous counsel of philanthropic friends, who, without possessing the slightest knowledge of the matter—hasten to our assistance, each with some infallible panacea for evils that exist only in his imagination and that of his party. Listen to them, and

you will conclude that we kidnap stray innocents, chaining them to our machinery, and compulsorily working them to death: whereas the fact is that we can scarcely find employment for a moiety of the applicants thronging our doors; and of all evils the one most dreaded by our supposed victims is that of dismissal. Allow me to ask would it suit the wishes of your poor friends, these Greens, to have their names erased from our books to-morrow?"

"No, for they are without resource."

"There are numerous establishments in the place, and perhaps in some a lack of practised hands: but they well know that such change would not better their condition. In fact, since you oblige me to speak plainly, they are a particularly troublesome family, of whom we should be heartily glad to rid ourselves; but the knowledge of their having little chance of admission elsewhere, particularly since the public disproof of a charge unjustly brought against an excellent servant of mine, induces us out of mere charity to let them continue. Trust me, doctor, these low-bred people of the working class are abundantly cunning. They make out a plausible story, calculated to move the commiseration of the upper ranks, but keep back what would neutralize its effects. We are not to judge of the conversation kept up in a mill by the standard of drawing-room propriety; nor to suppose that what would wound the delicacy of a young lady causes any trouble to a bobbin-filler."

"Granting all this, Mr. Z., it remains to prove that female modesty, where it does unquestionably exist, among those who are not gifted with wealth and accomplishments, is to be left wholly without protection; female virtue without a guard where its possessor is industriously disposed to labour for a subsistence in the service of Christian masters: that while the body is worn out by exhausting employment, the mind must needs be exposed to every contaminating influence, and the heart broken by unkindness if the individual dares to remain what every Englishman must desire his countrywomen to be, chaste and honest."

"Ay, there spoke the prejudice that always lurks under these demonstrations. You consider us as pursuing a course of injustice, and view every thing accord-

ingly. Because a coarse, rude, vulgar impudent young person, belonging to the dregs of society does not, on entering the mills, undergo as marvellous a transformation as the cotton itself, and come out a manufactured article prepared to figure in the high places of the land, we are denounced as though we had opened institutions to demoralize the virtuous, and vulgarize the refined of our species."

The doctor felt provoked, not so much at his opponent's ingenuity in eluding the attack, as at his own want of boldness in taking up the only sure vantage ground: this he now resolved to do, and spoke out.

"We are talking beside, or rather below the real mark. Whatever may be the relative duties of man to his fellow, the central points where all meet, and whence again they all harmoniously diverge, is the mutual duty of each to his God. The master who desires to render to his servants that which is equal, because he knows that he also has a Master in heaven, will above all things seek to prevent the placing of a stumbling-block in the way of their souls, while using their bodily faculties for his own profit. Now, sir, you cannot deny the plain words of scripture, that 'the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the people that forget God;' nor do you, I presume, in your own family, represent or regard a life of debauchery and crime as well-pleasing before God. Even were all labourers persons of mature age, this plea would hold good: for, of course, you would not keep a footman to attend on your family, whom you knew to be a drunkard, a blasphemer, a thief, a profligate: but when we consider that the vast majority of those taken into your mills are children of tender years, easily influenced, and susceptible of lasting impressions, for evil or for good, oh, surely it becomes a solemn question between you and that 'Master in heaven' how you use the great authority, the weighty responsibility inseparable from your position with regard to these, your fellow immortals."

"I protest, doctor, you are making out a connexion between the office of a 'cotton lord,' as you call us, and that of a spiritual lord or bishop, that I never dreamed of. Why, according to your views, we should each regard his mill as a diocese, and

preach in it!" He laughed, then proceeded with suppressed bitterness. "I am aware that your friend Lord Ashley labours hard to put this simple matter in the perplexing light of a theological question, and thereby misleads many."

"Lord Ashley," replied the doctor, "is no otherwise my friend than as he has entitled himself to the affectionate regard of every one who loves his God and his fellow-creatures. Neither am I aware that he has done what you say: quite the contrary. Proceeding on Christian principles, he has steadily kept in view the declared object of his compassionate efforts—an amelioration of bodily suffering to the factory children. I, on the other hand, have strenuously avoided that topic, although I could say much, very much, upon it, from actual observation during the last few hours in this town. I wished to direct your attention to another point; and in so doing to give no offence either to your feelings or to my own conscience."

"Believe me, doctor, I highly appreciate your candor: our position is by no means an enviable one."

"I admit it; but I think the remedy lies within your reach."

"So they tell us; but we take leave to think differently, and to fight our own battle with some hope of a final triumph. Pho! why every man who has any thing to do with the working classes knows their proverbial discontent: the more numerous, important and well-paid they are, the readier to strike for higher wages, and to pull our houses down about our ears." He spoke with an air that proved how wholly at variance with his real feeling was the moderation he had expressed, and then, with cool politeness asked if his guest would honour him with his company at dinner in the evening. The doctor thanked him, but said his time was fully occupied; and while taking his hat, inquired if any extra indulgence was ever allowed to such as had lost their health in the factories.

"Of course not. It would open a door to endless imposition, extortion, and wrong, if adopted as a rule; and if occasionally done, would furnish matter of discontent. While the people choose to work, they have their wages regularly paid; and when they choose to leave off, there is an end of our acquaintance."

"Well, Mr. Z., I have no wish to quarrel with any of your plans, nor to arraign the justice of your proceedings. To his own Master must each of us stand or fall. I will entertain a hope that on reflection, what I have related to you may lead to some practical results. Here is the case of a family, an aged widow and orphan children, deluded into migration from a safe and peaceful though humble home, by printed representations most grossly and palpably false in the sight of those who published them. They settle to work, anxious to procure an honest maintenance, and find themselves surrounded by every description of evil, without an effort, or the semblance of an effort, on the part of the employers, to enforce any thing but a rigorous exaction of bodily labour from them, and a strict performance of the contract, as regards their master's interests. They are taxed to the utmost of their strength, and so far beyond it as to sap the stream of life, dooming the young frame to a premature grave. Severity, in every possible shape, is practised; and justice, by every available device, frustrated. The men to whom you delegate all power in the mills may abuse it to any extent: you will not leave your sphere of refined gratification to look into such details: and should a complaint reach your ear it is quickly met by the crafty representations of those who know too well how to place your worldly interests in such a prominence as to eclipse the weightier concerns of eternity. Bodies are daily perishing: souls continually swelling the multitude whose hope is cut off for ever: and in all this you have a responsible part to bear, whether you believe it or no: a part assigned you of God, who will assuredly require an account of such stewardship. I pray that He may convince you of this, and while blotting out the past in the blood of the cross, so assist you in your future course, that the great account may be rendered at last with joy, and not with grief."

Helen did not die in the mill: but her last seizure took place there, and so alarmed her companions as to give a great effect to the few words she was enabled to speak to them before being carried home. Short, but severe, were her sufferings;

and in a few days a rough shell enclosed her wasted remains, which were laid beside those of Sarah Wright. This stroke fell too heavily on the poor widow to be parried; and after many fruitless struggles she was compelled to submit; accepting a pass back to her parish, and taking up her abode in the workhouse of L. To her the event was one of little moment, save as it inflicted a pang, of which she well knew the severity, on her Richard. He had done his utmost to avert it, but in vain; and to soften the stroke Mr. Barlow prevailed on the squire to take Willy into his service, as a helper in that department where Richard was giving such perfect satisfaction. Mary was, by the doctor's kind interest, apprenticed out to an humble business; where pride had little to feed on, and passion dared not flame out. The most distressing part of the business was what related to poor little Katy. She had no home, no friends but among her own country-people: and with anguish of heart the widow Green delivered her up to the care of one whom she knew to be a bigoted Romanist; and who, by the priest's aid, made out a sort of claim that could not be opposed by those who had no means to offer any other resource. Hudson promised to keep an eye on her, and this was the only earthly solace of the friend who had fondly hoped to see her grow up a second Helen under her fostering care.

It was on a bright day in Spring, after labouring together in their master's park, that Richard and Willy seated themselves to eat their frugal meal beneath an ash, just putting forth its tender leaves to the fostering ray.

"Oh," said the little boy, "what a thankful heart I ought to have; being in the dear country again, to see the flowers grow, and to hear the birds sing, and to feel the fine fresh breeze blowing upon me! I think, Richard, I should be as happy as ever I was, if I could only see you as gay and sprightly as you used to be."

"I can't, Willy: for half my sprightliness was owing to the pleasant thoughts I used to be having about days to come, when you would all be about me, and I working for you all, and helping you to be independent."

"But, Richard, is it not better we should be working for ourselves, as I and Mary do, instead of depending on you? Besides, what I earn would not keep me by half, only for what you do for me, my own kind brother."

"True, darling, it is better you should be labouring honestly for yourselves: and I ought to be very thankful that dear Granny is decently comfortable in—, where she is: But, Willy, we are a broken family, and the best and brightest of us are no longer on earth. You must not be surprised if I never get up my spirits as they used to be: for my thoughts are far away, in a better place than this."

"'Tis true, Richard, you are changed greatly: I sometimes fret to see you always so grave, but I can't wonder at it. I wish you would consider what a great mercy it is you have got us out of the factories: it would be far better to beg our bread along these roads than to earn it there."

"I believe so, indeed."

"Yes: seeing the spring comes on makes us feel it more than ever. I am sure I am ready to cry when I think of the poor children in those frightful mills, who don't know what sunshine is like, except that it makes the work-rooms hotter, and shows them the dirty flue flying about, and makes them think how pleasant it would be to get a run, and a play, in the fields, or even in the street. You can't think how dreadful it is: it makes us feel as if we hated every body and every thing, and could do wickedly for the mere pleasure of being wicked. If any good thought comes into the mind, it is sure to be driven out by hearing something very bad; and as neither God nor man seem to care about us, we have little care of offending either."

"Don't say *we*, Willy."

"No, I was speaking as if I still belonged to them, the remembrance is so strong on my mind: and I am sure it was the wickedness of the place, more than the work, that killed Helen."

"But the work was enough to do it."

"Yes, if she had been a younger girl. I don't know if a grown person can stand it better, indeed; but I am sure the little ones must be made of iron if they do. Only think what it is to feel you *must* go

to sleep, out of downright fatigue, and yet you dare not: to see the children about you, moving their fingers with their eyes shut, dreaming they are at work, and the overlooker giving the poor things a cut to wake them; so that the fright sets their hearts going like mad, and then they feel weaker and sillier than before. I can't bear to think," added the boy, while tears stole down his cheeks, "I can't bear to think that now, when I am basking in this beautiful sunshine, leaning on your kind knee, and having you watch that I don't even overtire myself at any pleasant work, my poor little companions are going on, on, on, in their weary slavery, the whirligig wheels always whirring, and not a pleasant sight nor a cheerful sound

to make a variety. Their bare feet hot on the boards, and to be pattering through the cold mud at night to their close, dirty homes, where they won't be let sleep long enough to get up refreshed for to-morrow's toil."

"It does cheer me, Willy, to think you are out of it all."

"It ought: and oh, Richard, we should pray for those men who are trying to make the factory children less miserable; and whenever you speak to the great folks, put in a word: for I can't help thinking God must be angry with them while they take so much care about their own little ones, and have no thought, no feeling for the perishing children of the poor!"

PASSING THOUGHTS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE short Essays contained in the following pages are what their title imports—Passing Thoughts, excited by familiar objects, or recollections, which were noted down as they arose, with such application as the theme suggested. The greater part have appeared in that excellent periodical, “The Church of England Magazine,” whence they are now collected, and, with some additions, formed into a volume.

Christians in general find it a delightful exercise to trace the hand of God through the various operations of his power, in the kingdom of providence, as in that of grace. It was the favourite occupation of David; and he who follows it in the Psalmist’s spirit, seeing Christ in all, and enjoying all in Christ, will always be led to the Psalmist’s conclusion: “O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches!”

February, 1838.



PASSING THOUGHTS.



THE BRANCH.

ONE of those sudden and violent gales, that occasionally sweep over the fair face of summer to wrinkle and deform it, had blown so strongly during the night, that morning presented the unwelcome spectacle of a branch—the only one left by the woodman's axe on an aged elm before my window—broken from the trunk, and hanging suspended by a merely external connexion, which could convey no nourishment to it. During the day, I watched, with regretful looks, the evident fading of those leaves that had formed so graceful a screen to the window of my study: while tossing more wildly in every fresh gust of wind, the broken branch seemed hastening to its final fall.

Towards evening, a party of idle boys congregated on the open space; and, after trying various pastimes, took it into their heads to enjoy a swing, as they said, on, or rather with the drooping branch. By turns they seized it, springing from the ground, or climbing by the trunk; and, struggling as high as they could, they set the bough in motion by their weight, waving to and fro, in desperate glee, at such a distance from the ground, that had the slender strip of rind given way, the consequences must have been dreadful. Emboldened by impunity each foolish lad endeavoured to surpass his predecessor in this wanton exposure of life and limb; until, alarmed at the scene, I privately sent to a person sufficiently authorized, who, placing a ladder against the trunk, mounted, and with one blow of an axe rendered the separation complete. The withering

branch, thus cut off, fell, and was borne away, to be cast into the fire and burned.

Perhaps few seasons are more friendly to solemn thought than the closing eve of a summer's day, clouded over, and ruffled by the stormy wind. Here was a text, that would require very little skill to spin it out to a long discourse; a similitude clear to the dullest apprehension, and fraught with humbling considerations. Likening my elm to "the True Vine," how could I fail to follow up the comparison? A fair professor, with much to invite the good opinion of men, unable to withstand the trial of trouble and persecution arising because of the word, and virtually broken off through unbelief; yet maintaining that outward hold, which includes no spiritual participation in the root and fatness of the tree; hanging on, with weak though vaunting tenacity, and pointing downward, while every living branch bears its head toward the sky; the very abundance of his leafy professions only rendering more conspicuous his progress towards utter corruption, and holding out a perilous temptation to thoughtless souls. They, perhaps, not stopping to investigate the reality of his union with the tree, and delighted to find him tending to their own earthly region, from which his fellows labour more and more to rise, catch at him as a sort of connecting link—professing to rely on the stock that he seems to spring from; clinging to him rather than to that stock; and, by the weight of their worthless fellowship, hastening the fall that may prove as fatal to themselves. I marked how the grasp of those climbers continually tore down the leaves, which lay heaped beneath, until a very rude, short

gust of wind swept them off in a moment, amid clouds of dust. Here was the positive reality of the prophet's touching image, "We all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have carried us away."

I turned from the window at length, overpowered by the thought—how awful is the responsibility of a branch, a recognized member of the visible Church! Either it is good, pleasant, profitable, doing honour to the stem that bears it; or a blemish, a disgrace to that stem, and to those who behold it a snare. And oh, how mysterious is the union, which, abiding, gives life, strength, beauty, and fertility; but which may be destroyed without immediately breaking the outward tie. May not such a branch, under the power of self-deception, conceive that still it lives, though palpably withering in its place? It is an impressive call for deep searching of heart, when, for aught we know, the axe may be sharpening that is to lay us in the dust.

As these ideas occupied me, I happened to glance on a favourite greenhouse plant, the principal part of which had once, by a fall, been apparently broken as hopelessly as the elm-bough; but my anxiety to save it had prompted so many expedients, that, by dint of propping, binding, and other careful helps, the injury was repaired, and my plant stood as vigorously blooming as ever. Sweet lesson! I mentally said; may it be mine to become a healer wherever I see a weak branch in danger of separating from the tree. Many a wounded spirit is utterly broken by the injudicious harshness, or unbelieving hopelessness, of those who might bind it up, if they would heartily set themselves to the work. Surely this, one of the blessed offices of the Saviour, well becomes his followers. To crush a weak brother is an easy, and, to our corrupt nature, congenial task; but to raise the falling, to support the wavering, to dress the wound, and, by dressing, to hide it from unfeeling eyes—this is an acting of the new nature, which God the Spirit alone can create and sustain.

THE GRAVE STONE.

"It is useless to puzzle yourself any longer over what is utterly illegible—the

letters are worn past all hope of deciphering a single sentence. Come away."

And thus ends the last effort of poor humanity to perpetuate its cherished sorrows, or to display its pompous boastings, in the sight of posterity. That old, grey, mossy stone, with its half-shadow of a cherub's face peeping out from the broken outline of a pair of wings; its green and yellow patches of corroded surface, where the long inscription once appeared; and its slanting position, bending forward while it sinks sideways into the soil,—that is the sole surviving memento of—what? It is a memento, for it says "Remember;" but who or what is to be remembered by it, all the wit of all earth's wise ones cannot discover. Nay, though, right under the cherub's chin, we may trace the course of the "Hic jacet," by knowing where it should stand, still, no more is communicated than the bare existence of such a tablet in that place must make known. It is a grave—its inmate has long tenanted the silent dwelling; and here our information ceases.

Is it, then, idle and vain so to mark a spot, endeared, perhaps, to some fond breast far beyond all that the residue of the globe contains? No; it is comely and befitting our nature so to do; though I look on the practice not as a mere natural impulse, but as one among the multitude of unregarded evidences afforded of the doctrine of the resurrection, as having been revealed to man from the earliest period. We find the art, not only of sepulture, but of preserving the human body itself after death, carried to a pitch of perfection at which modern science can only gaze and wonder, when unrolling from its delicate wrappers the corpse of two or three thousand years' unchanged existence. It seems to bespeak a thorough conviction that the spirit would reanimate its earthly tenement; but with a total ignorance or mistrust of the Power that could gather up the scattered dust, and say,

"Lost in earth, in air, or main,
Kindred atoms meet again!"

Probably not to one in a thousand who puts a head-stone at the grave of a departed friend does it occur, that there is the remotest connexion between his act

and the recognition of a great and glorious truth; yet I cannot sever them. That the custom prevails, with extravagant additions, such as the periodical digging up and caressing of the dry bones, among some people lost in the lowest depths of barbarism, and destitute even of a ray of spiritual understanding, does not militate against the supposition. It is in such circumstances that we find the rites of propitiatory sacrifice observed with jealous care, and practised with unsparing cruelty. Yet who questions the divine origin of the sacrificial rite, or fails to recognise in it a testimony to the truth of holy writ, proving that the sons of Noah, of whom the whole earth was over-spread, transmitted, each to his descendants, an obligatory knowledge of the act which they with their fathers first performed upon issuing from the ark, by offering on an altar the victims miraculously preserved for that purpose? I know it is a question with some, whether the doctrine of the resurrection of the body was held in the patriarchal church; but so clear to my apprehension is the language of Scripture on this point, that I never could contrive to perplex myself with a doubt. I believe it to have been as well understood by the earliest of the Old Testament saints as the nature and end of sacrifices. I love to think so. And on an old illegible grave-stone I can find a lesson written, beyond the mere tale of how the fashion of this world passeth away.

The feeling to which I refer the origin of monuments erected on the spot where the dead moulder, is distinct from that which would record their names in historical tablets. In the former there would be something as humiliating as in the latter there is honourable distinction, were it not connected with a higher destiny. The old custom of burning the dead is far less harrowing to the mind, than, on deliberate reflection, is the fearful process of gradual decomposition, and ultimate mingling with a cold damp soil. The ancients enclosed in an urn the calcined mass obtained from their funeral pyres, and stored it up; but to put a mark upon the spot where corruption and the worm are fulfilling their slow, noisome task on the body of a beloved object, does really seem like a tri-

umph of faith over sight, of hope over experience, worthy of those who have been taught concerning them that sleep in Jesus, that their scattered dust shall rise again. Then, how sublime becomes the language of a grave-stone!

"Stop," says the crumbling monument of by-gone generations,—“Stop, passenger, and mark me. Here lies a brother of your race; I show you precisely where he was laid under the sod. Dig now, even to the centre, in quest of the frame so fearfully and wonderfully made. Search, sift every handful of earth as you cast it forth, you shall not find a vestige of my charge. All is resolved into the parent element, beyond the power of your keenest investigation to separate or discern the one from the other. Yet, read me again. Here lies that mortal; and hence he shall again come forth, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. What you toss around you is the corruptible that must put on incorruption; the mortal that must put on immortality. Go, learn from my defaced surface a lesson of faith,—‘Blessed are they which believe, yet see not.’”

Summon me not, therefore, from gazing on this crumbling head-stone. I may rove far, and look upon many an object, before I encounter a monitor at once so humble, so venerable, so faithful, and so just.

THE CAPTIVE.

DURING a day's visit to the great metropolis, I had occasion to pass through one of the narrow streets of Bloomsbury; and there, suspended from a nail, below a dirty ground-floor window, I saw a cage of very small dimensions, in which was a full-grown lark. Painful as it is at all times, and under any circumstances, to behold any of God's creatures in captivity, there is something peculiarly revolting to every humane feeling when the prisoner is a British bird, formed to rejoice and revel in our own free atmosphere. But in this case, something more touching was super-added. Just on the top of the opposite house fell a ray of brilliant sunshine; while a casual opening between some roofs presented the most inviting track of azure sky: and, to complete the picture,

several sparrows were fluttering and twittering upon the tiles. The poor lark, with back depressed, beak pointing upwards, and wings half-lifted from his sides, stood close to the front of his cage, as in the very act to spring, and rise to the spot on which his eyes were intently fixed. But, alas! the prison-bars were around him; and, taught by sad experience, he forbore the efforts which would have but bruised and lacerated his tender frame. I walked on, under feelings of indignant sympathy, almost regretting that the laws of property forbade my opening the cage-door and setting the captive free.

I could not forget the poor lark: alike in the broad, busy street, in the narrow, cheerless lane, and in the spacious square, thickly set with trees and flowering shrubs, did the image of the pining prisoner haunt me. I believe it was the attitude of the bird, rather than the mere fact of his captivity, that moved me so much. It was that he evidently *felt* his doom—that he *saw* his way to happier scenes; and yet, from utter hopelessness of success, refrained from trying the wires, of which he but too well knew the unyielding strength. A lark—a creature made to soar, and sing at a height whereto the eye of man cannot follow him, though the ear may catch those powerful tones of free and fearless melody: a lark—to whom the highest tree-top is an insignificant exaltation, and the circuit of a hundred fields too narrow for his ken: a lark to be shut in, where, literally, he had not space to stretch his aching wings, and where no enlivening sunbeam, no gush of pleasant air, could reach him; where the windings of a dirty lane bounded his prospects, and the discordant din of annoying sounds alone fell on his ear. Poor bird! where in this world shall I find a suitable comparison for thee?

Perhaps in him, who, having once felt that he was originally created to inhabit a higher sphere, and that his true field of enjoyment lies far, far beyond the wretched vanities of earth, is yet so tied and bound with the chain of his sins, that he cannot break away. He has tried it in his own strength, and has been cast down wounded. He looks at the children of God in the world, and sees that they have a sunbeam shed upon them which never visits him:

they can rise towards heaven, and pour wide the songs of praise which his heavy heart refuses to utter. He feels himself a captive—he longs to be free—he gazes upwards, and stands, as it were, prepared to start away; but still he moves not a step towards the accomplishment of his desire; for his prison-door is fast, and open it he cannot, by any skill or power of his own. He hates his dungeon; he hates all that surrounds him of sight and sound, so uncongenial to the new nature that he begins to feel. His soul is prepared for liberty, but it is yet heavy within him; and his secret cry is,—“I am so fast in prison, I cannot get loose.”

Happy mourner! escape is nigh. No fellow of thine, no created being, is permitted to loose the bonds that enchain thee; but the pitifulness of His great mercy who has purchased thee at the price of his own blood, and whose property, therefore, thou art, will surely do so. It is He who has directed thine upturned gaze to those regions after which thou pantest; and He, ere long, will stretch the liberating hand, and withdraw the mysterious bolt, and make thee free indeed. Then, up and away to the loftiest heights of unfettered contemplation, where the eye of carnal reason cannot pursue thee, and bid the concave echo to thy song. And then again, like the descending lark, shut close thy pinions to thy breast in shrinking self-abasement, and fall, low as the dust of the earth, to wonder at the height thou hast attained. Nestle among kindred sods of the field, until the Sun of Righteousness, casting another of his glowing beams upon thy soul, shall once more call thee heavenward, to rise, and rejoice, and make melody, in an atmosphere all thine own.

THE BALLOON.

QUIETLY seated near the window, on a clear evening, very lately, my attention was attracted to an object floating far aloft, which I knew to be a balloon. Recent events had attached a painful interest to the scene; and as my eye followed the receding speck, and imagination pictured the aerial voyagers looking down from their dizzy height, I fell into a train of thought, founded on the query, whether

such perilous exploits can bear the test of scriptural examination,—can be lawful to a Christian man.

The precept was forcibly brought to mind, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." I can well conceive that I eat and drink to the glory of God, when I desire, by due sustenance, to render my bodily powers more active in the duties of my particular sphere and calling; and, in like manner, a blessing may be conscientiously asked on many actions that have apparently no immediate connexion with the glory of God, but to which, under right government, they ultimately tend. I cannot, however, think thus of the desperate venture made by those who commit themselves to an element in which they are not fitted to move, and where they cannot for an instant sustain themselves, but by the aid of machinery, that may fail them in the moment of greatest need. The same objection may, in some measure, be advanced against a sea-voyage; but there is this material difference, that, formed as our globe is with intersecting oceans, the great command of Christ,—“Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,” cannot be fulfilled without the aid of navigation; and whatever conduces to the exercise and improvement of that art, is, in the eye of a Christian, “to the glory of God.”

But who can, in the act of stepping into a balloon, utter from his heart the prayer,—“Keep thy servant from presumptuous sins?” Who can persuade himself that such wanton hazarding of life and limb will, directly or indirectly, promote “the glory of God?” Is there any spot of earth, otherwise inaccessible, but to which the Gospel may be carried in a balloon? Is there any warrant in Scripture for expecting that the providential succour continually afforded those “that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters,” will be extended to such as, for the gratification of idle curiosity, or the pampering of their boastful vanity, essay to “mount up with wings as eagles,” in a sense and a fashion that God never intended or authorized man to mount in? No. Assuredly, thought I, as the balloon gradually disappeared from my sight, those poor people are doing nothing to

the glory of God at this moment, unless their presumption should be overruled to the permanent humbling of their high aspirations. High!—The black speck had floated off towards the west, and in the dark, cool blue of the eastern sky, a brilliant star had already become visible, twinkling with liquid lustre through the air. Alas for the height that our ballooning brethren, with all the powers of gas, can aspire to! That little star had thrown open the illimitable, unfathomable ocean of space: and the idea of a balloon, at its utmost attainable distance from earth, was that of a buoy bobbing about in seeming independence, under the bows of its own ship. Man is so very little, at the tip-top of his self-invested greatness, so very earthly in his most aerial flights, that, until he becomes, by regenerating grace, a temple of God, he can excite no admiration unmixed with pity, in a breast where the law of truth is written.

That twinkling star had cast a sad cloud on the achievements of the aeronauts. They had not ascended high enough to add a hair's breath to the apparent diameter of any heavenly body; but they soared at a fearful altitude as regarded their own safety. The question forced itself on my mind,—Are they now, with adoring thankfulness, acknowledging the hand that upholds them in their giddy course, and looking to that hand alone for a safe return to earth? Have their souls risen heavenward, even in the small proportion in which their bodies have ascended; and do earthly things appear as little in their estimation as to their visual organs? Do they consider that, fly where they may, their destination is fixed beyond recall,—“To dust thou shalt return;” and that, after a while, the globe from which they have wantonly started off for a small season, shall in turn glide away from them, and for ever? They must yet again be launched forth on space; but whether caught up to meet the Lord in the air, or borne away to regions of eternal woe,—I greatly fear this all-important question is not the subject of their converse, under circumstances so strikingly calculated to force it on them. And why not? Because, I have come to the conclusion, that no man who holds his life and faculties as a trust committed to him for the glory of God, will,

without any adequate motive, place them in such manifest jeopardy. Surely he would, through grace, be enabled to think of his Master on the pinnacle of the temple, and answer the presumptuous suggestion in the words of that Master,—“It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”

DREAMING.

AMONG the many beauties of Campbell's earlier poetry, and, indeed, in the whole collection of our lighter modern lyrics, there is nothing more true to nature than the little piece called “The Soldier's Dream.” So short as to become a favourite song, it contains within it the story of a life; and I question whether among men there is one whose heart's recess it would not reach. The contrast between present and past is slightly, yet how powerfully sketched! The soldier, who bivouacs

“Where thousands had sunk on the ground over-
power'd,

The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die,”

represents himself in a situation that combines as many images of hardship, horror, or peril, as ever were compressed into two lines:

“Reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain;”

and then comes the exquisite transition to all that is soft, and familiar, and endearing, in the tranquillity of rural scenery;

“I flew to the pleasant fields, travers'd so oft
In life's morning watch, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers
sung.”

This gem of a poem will probably commend itself to the feelings, just in proportion as the contrast is marked, and deep, and striking, between what is and what has been. The traveller, who, from a distant spot, where clouds are lowering and the rough breeze assailing him, looks back to behold the home he has quitted, with all its sweet associations gathered round it, lying just within the range of a slanting sunbeam, and thereby thrown out in warm and beautiful relief from the shadowy region that interposes—such a traveller will linger to gaze on the past with feelings peculiar to the dark and dreary present.

Thus it is with the dreamer, who, during the hours of sleep, has been carried back to scenes long lost, and heard the tone of voices long silent. He cannot recall the sweet vision, but he closes his eye, and summons memory to recount to him what memory has recently shown him. She has, as it were, unlocked the casket containing jewels that once were his, but now are hers only; and feasted his sight with what has for ever eluded his grasp. And he submits, for it is the universal lot of man; but he sighs over the treasure that never looked so lovely as when for ever lost.

How wonderful is this faculty of the mind! I write under the impression of recent experience, having retraced in a dream the beloved haunts of early years, expatiating as I thought, to one who had never before seen them, on the various objects, the noble relics of antiquity, and beautiful intermixture of orchard and garden-ground. At one spot I paused—it was an old brick house, placed back in a neglected, overgrown shrubbery. That building I have not seen for nearly a quarter of a century, nor has any circumstance brought it to my remembrance. I never visited the inmates, but merely knew their name as residents there. I had long forgotten that name, and stood, as it seemed, for a few moments, until enabled to recall it. I awoke with a vivid recollection of all the minutæ connected with the old house—never remarkable for any thing to me or others—and with the aspect of its former inhabitants portrayed with the liveliest fidelity to my mental view. In all this there was nothing extraordinary, merely because every body has experienced something similar. Yet, among the phenomena of mind, as acted upon by external circumstances, this faculty of receiving the impression of an indifferent object, retaining it through a series of years amid a multitude of after-impressions,—I may say burnt into it, such was the severity of the stamp,—and restoring it on demand is most wonderful. It is a part of the mystery of our compound being that makes itself felt; it strikes a chord, causing the whole heart to vibrate; it brings home to us the beautiful remark of Chalmers, that every man has in himself his own peculiar and exclusive world, into the

recesses of which the dearest, the most sympathising of friends cannot enter.

There breathes not the mortal to whom I could unfold the long chain of recollections revived by the single idea of a passing dream. Some would listen, would try to sympathise, but, except by transferring the feeling to their own bosoms, and connecting with it their individual experience, no sympathy could they afford; nor would that be a real participation of my thoughts, but an awakening of their own. There is only one to whom the desolate heart can turn with the deep and sweet conviction that he knows all. An awful consideration indeed, when we call to mind the innumerable transgressions that stand recorded together with those scenes and events; but to him who is in Christ Jesus, him to whom there is now no condemnation, being redeemed from the curse of the law and brought nigh to a reconciled Father, it is a thought full of heavenly consolation. The heart knoweth its own bitterness; God is greater than the heart, and knoweth all things. If in his wise dispensations he has seen good to crush the flowers, and to suffer many thorns to remain, he knows the sweetness of the former, the keen points of the latter, and weighs in a just balance the burden that he has laid on his child. He does not, like our fellow-man, make light of the sorrow, nor, like ourselves, view it in exaggerated proportions; but with the perfection of wisdom, knowledge, and tender compassion, "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are but dust." It is astonishing with what soothing power a dream may come across a harassed mind, blunting the edge of the present with sweet remembrances of the past: and I should be slow to deny to the God of all consolation the praise due for this mercy. Those who from a distempered digestion, or otherwise, are habitually oppressed by gloomy and terrific dreams, scruple not to pray against the visitation: why should they whose bosom is soothed by visions of a very opposite tendency, hesitate to render thanks to the Giver, not only of the staff that supports our pilgrim-step on the heavenward path, but of the little wild flower that flings a breath of momentary fragrance across it?

THE WHITE PLUMES.

WALKING slowly on a sultry day along the high path that skirted a public road, my attention was roused by the sudden question of a little child, "What is coming behind us? See, it is all black and white." I turned, and saw a mourning-coach, through the side-windows of which projected the ends of a small coffin, with its velvet pall; followed by a similar carriage, containing three or four gentlemen in black cloaks. The usual attendants, with their long staves, walked with measured steps on either side the coaches, their hat-bands being of white silk, as were those of the drivers. But what had chiefly attracted the observation of my little companion, was, the stately plume of white feathers waving on the heads of noble horses, whose glossy coats of jet black, velvet housings, long flowing manes and tails, and majestic bearing, as they paced along with restrained animation, could derive no additional grace from what, nevertheless, gave a striking finish to the spectacle.

"It is a baby's funeral," said I.

"But why are the feathers white? I thought all funerals went in mourning, and white is no mourning, you know."

I explained to the little inquirer the custom of substituting white for black on such an occasion; and then gratified his wish by accompanying, or rather following, the procession to the church, which was not far distant.

Why are the plumes white? I mentally repeated, and looked again at those waving crests. In point of fact they were not white, for the dusty road had imparted to them enough of its own substance to disguise their snowy aspect. Belonging, as they certainly did, to the pomps and vanities of this world, they wore its livery—defilement. Still, as distinguished from customary black, they were white plumes, and, with the other admixtures of that hue, shed light upon the darksome accompaniments, like sunshine breaking into smiles the cloudy shadows on some distant hill. "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing," was the text that occurred to my mind: and I dwelt upon the "sure

and certain hope" that, in the case of an infant taken away, as infants undoubtedly are, from the evil to come, cannot fail to mingle a beam of gladness even with the first deep sorrow of a bereaved parent.

Again I looked; and again the proud tread of those stately horses, the waving of their bright crests, and the fluttering of the white-edged pall, as a current of air passed occasionally through the windows, bespoke a character less of mourning than of triumph. I thought of the little inmate, riding there in solitary state, as of one who had conquered in the battle without striking a blow, succeeded in the race without moving a foot; and who now was crowned with glory incorruptible, never to fade away. It seemed almost a privilege to follow in such a train, to assist at such an ovation. But when the procession had reached its appointed place, and the pageantry, withdrawing, left the coffin to be laid upon its tressels in the aisle of the church, and David's touching lament over frail mortality was poured forth, the joyousness of the preceding moments gave place to feelings sad and solemn, as the mind reverted to what man was at his bright creation, and what he is become through the entrance of sin and death. Scarcely could a handful of earth be selected from the ground whereon we stood, when the coffin was lowered to its final resting-place, which had not once been instinct with rational life, capable of glorifying God, whose is the body no less than the soul; and O, among the multitude who had there become dust, how few might I dare to hope had so glorified him! Dark indeed is the history of man, as written on earth's surface in characters formed by its rising mounds; and again I rejoiced that another had been rescued ere he could lift a hand, or form a thought in rebellion against his God. Still, rebellion was his inheritance; and the taint would have speedily showed itself in open acts of presumptuous sin, proving his natural claim to a rebel's doom; a portion of which, the penalty of bodily death, had already been awarded, in token that he was liable to the whole infliction; but the short history of that babe was beautifully summed up in one line of the well-known epitaph;

"He died, for Adam sinned: he lives, for Jesus died."

As I passed where the carriages waited to convey the mourners back to their distant residence, I looked for the white plumes; but they were gone. It was well; for what had he farther to do with any of this world's idle show? The earth had enclosed him, to open no more that portal, till she shall be called to yield up her dead, and to restore, in power and incorruption, what had been sown in weakness and dishonour. The white plumes, wherewith parental love had done honour to the baby's obsequies, could honour him no longer; but white robes had glittered in heaven, and palms had waved, and harps of gold had been tuned, to welcome a lamb, from among the lost sheep, to the soft green pastures and fountains of living waters, where the good Shepherd tends his happy flock for ever.

O that we could realize these things more feelingly! We live in a shadowy world, and grasp at those shadows, as though they were the only real substance: while on that which endureth for ever we cast but now and then a transient thought, or stretch forth a wishful hand, without any real and vigorous effort to lay hold on eternal life. The trappings of woe are soon laid aside, and with them, too readily, the lesson that they perchance had brought to our reluctant minds. May the Holy Spirit, helping our infirmities, put life and meaning into the prayer too often mechanically uttered, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"

LOYALTY.

It has often struck me, that one of the glaring evils characteristic of these latter days, that of despising dominion, is allowed to creep into places where it ought to be especially guarded against. It is not unusual among persons who profess to take the holy Scriptures as their daily and hourly guide, to hear the proceedings of those in highest authority commented on in a severe, censorious strain, for which there is no warrant in the word of God, and to which the whole tenor and spirit, no less than the letter, of our liturgical services are strongly opposed.

Among the godly men who were raised up to be the reformers of our national religion, the fathers of our English Church, no feature perhaps more prominently marks their characters than that of reverence for the kingly authority, even when, by its dreadful abuse, they were led to the dungeon, the rack, and the stake. They saw in the reigning monarch God's "chosen servant," appointed to be their sovereign. They knew that, the hearts of kings being in his rule and governance, every ordinance, whether for present prosperity, or wholesome affliction, to the militant Church, dispensed through the hand of that vicegerent, was to be received as coming from Him by whom kings rule: and it would be difficult to collect, from the voluminous annals of even Mary's reign, instances of deviation from this heaven-taught principle of loyalty. Rebuke was indeed administered occasionally by those who, coming as "ambassadors for Christ," delivered a message from him, even to crowned heads: but this was done reverently and carefully; while they who were commissioned so to do, ceased not to urge on their flocks the submission due from subjects to their sovereign. Intercessory prayer then held the place which is now too often usurped by severe animadversion. "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" were the dying words of exiled Tyndal, when suffering strangulation at the stake in a foreign land; and many a beautiful prayer of like import is recorded of that noble army of martyrs. Are we wiser, or more enlightened than they? A royal deviation from the straight line, even in comparatively unimportant matters, cannot now be traced, but it calls forth a strain of observations such as our pious fathers would have silenced with no light rebuke: and the evil effects of this unguarded concurrence in what is, alas! too justly termed the spirit of the age, are incalculable. In God's word we see the welfare of Christian subjects inseparably connected with the well-being of their king; and the scriptural means of promoting that well-being distinctly pointed out. "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: *for kings and for all that*

are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." We do greatly err, if, putting aside the governing powers that be, *ordained of God*, we seek good things for the country apart from the recognition of that ordinance. Do we recognise it aright, when, exercising what we conceive to be Christian liberty, we bandy severe remarks, even to the extent of speaking evil of dignities? Our sympathies are readily awakened by a scene of poverty and grief; why are they so deadened when contemplating the splendours that necessarily surround those who *must* often carry an aching head and anxious heart beneath the hereditary honours that devolve on them? How frequently do we find our own feet entangled in the snares spread by our crafty foe; and if every secret fall were publicly exposed, what a spectacle would the holiest of us become! Yet the humbling effect of this individual experience appears to be lost when the actions of the great come under review; though the enemy of mankind has a manifest interest in redoubling his efforts to ensnare them.

It is well known that the revered father of our present king lived in the practice of continual intercession for his people; and that his prayer was accepted, let the stupendous mercies, the wondrous deliverance that exempted our nation from the scourge which desolated Europe, testify. Do we owe no debt of grateful love to the progeny of our Hezekiah? Does no secret consciousness of especial obligation bid English hearts respond to the Divine call, "Honour the king?" O, if one of us, yet vigorous in life and strength, with every advantage of spiritual knowledge, and deep experience of the loving-kindness of the Lord, were to-morrow exalted to that giddy height, and surrounded with those fearfully perplexing cares that it is now the lot of one aged individual to encounter, how would he look around upon the Church that hailed him its temporal head, and from the inmost recesses of a trembling heart, exclaim, "Brethren, pray for us!" Let no Christian be beguiled into the sin of omission in this most solemn and imperative duty; it is a sin that will be visited on his children's children. Be ours, in its full, its richly spiritual meaning, that sub-

lime aspiration which the Holy Ghost put into the mouths of Israel's high-priest and faithful prophet of old: "God save the king: long live the king: may the king live FOR EVER!"

THE GIPSY.

"Do you want your fortune told, ma'am?" said one of this outcast tribe, as we met, a short time ago, on a broad heath. I shrank instinctively from the bold, half-laughing stare of her brilliant eyes, and, with a silent shake of the head, walked on. This was followed by a feeling of self-reproach, that I could not stifle: the circumstances were such, that I could not have spoken to the unhappy creature; for a number of carriages, donkeys, and disorderly persons, were there clustered together, on the occasion of some neighbouring fair or races; and I had difficulty in conducting two or three children over the disagreeable spot which we were obliged to pass. But the question forced itself on my mind, whether, if I had been so accosted under less unfavourable circumstances, I should have resisted the impulse of natural aversion, and addressed that poor depraved gipsy as an immortal soul, destined to an eternal, unchangeable state of being, and evidently hastening along the path of destruction. I could not satisfactorily answer my own query; there is no aptitude in the natural heart to such work; and it is idle to speculate on what we would do in circumstances merely suppositious. Many have, like Peter, vaunted, in the hour of safety, how boldly they would go to prison and to death for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, who, when the trial actually came, were made ashamed of their vain boasting, and denied their faith: others, shrinking with terror from the anticipated hour of temptation, in mistrust of their own experienced weakness, have, out of that weakness, been made so strong, that their names now stand enrolled among the boldest and brightest in the noble army of martyrs. The habit of fancying scenes and situations, with the part that we ourselves should take in them, is more hurtful than is generally supposed. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be," is the promise

given; and we ought by no means to anticipate the day, seeing that we cannot anticipate or calculate the measure of strength that God may see good to vouchsafe.

But I must return to the gipsy. The rencontre with her gave rise to a long train of thought, which occupied me during the rest of my walk. I was near an abode of royalty, and could not but recall the touching anecdote of the beloved and venerated monarch George III., who, when hunting near Windsor once, with his characteristic tenderness of feeling, relinquished the enjoyment of the chase out of compassion to his exhausted horse, and, gently riding alone through an avenue of the forest, was led by the cry of distress to an open space, where, under a brunching oak, on a little pallet of straw, lay a dying gipsy woman. Dismounting and hastening to the spot, his majesty anxiously inquired of a girl, who was weeping over the sufferer, "What, my dear child, can be done for you?" "Oh, sir, my dying mother wanted a religious person to teach her, and to pray with her before she died. I ran all the way before it was light this morning to Windsor, and asked for a minister, but no one could I find to come to pray with my dear mother." The dying woman's agitated countenance bore witness that she understood and felt the cruel disappointment. The king,—O lovely lesson for kings!—exclaimed, "I am a minister; and God has sent me to instruct and comfort your mother." Then, seating himself on a pack, he took the hand of the gipsy woman, showed the nature and demerit of sin, and pointed her to Jesus, the one and all-sufficient Saviour. His words appeared to sink deep into her heart; her eyes brightened, she looked up, she smiled; and, while an expression of peace stole over her pallid features, her spirit fled away, to bear a precious testimony before the King of kings, of that MINISTER'S faithfulness to his awful charge. When the party, who had missed their sovereign, and were anxiously searching the wood for him, rode up, they found him seated by the corpse, speaking comfort to the weeping children. The sequel is not less beautiful: I quote the words of the narrative. "He now rose up, put some gold into the hands of the afflicted girls, promised them

nis protection, and bade them look to Heaven. He then wiped the tears from his eyes, and mounted his horse. His attendants, greatly affected, stood in silent admiration. Lord L. was going to speak; but his majesty, turning to the gipsies, and pointing to the breathless corpse, and to the weeping girls, said, with strong emotion, 'Who, my lord, who, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto these?'

Reader, do you hold in affectionate reverence the memory of this English Hezekiah, now gone to receive a brighter crown than earth can give? Let, then, his eloquent example plead with you, when God gives you opportunity of following it. You will occasionally meet a gipsy in your path, or some other poor wanderer from the ways of God, to whom you can deliver the message of reconciliation, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; and you know not but the Lord may even then be awakening in that outcast's mind a desire for the teaching, that you, if you know Christ as your Saviour, can certainly afford. Remember the good king's words, and the high authority whence he quoted them. Ask yourself, "Who is neighbour unto this wounded soul?" and strive to be that neighbour, pouring in the wine and oil of Christian consolation, if the case be one of awakened conscience; and if the spirit be yet lulled in the fatal slumber of habitual and allowed sin, sounding the call to awake, to arise from the dead, and receive light from Christ. However bright the eye, and ruddy the cheek, and active the frame, still the poor gipsy is *dying*, and so are you. Work while it is day; for the night cometh, when you can work no longer.

THE NEEDLE.

In my younger days I was very fond of a pretty poem entitled "A Prayer for Indifference." I have since learned to pray for better things, and and to look for something more in literary composition than touching thought and graceful expression: but there is a stanza in that well-known little piece that I often think on, with a different application indeed:

"Nor peace nor ease the heart can know,
That, like the needle true,
Turns at the touch of joy or woe,
And turning, trembles too."

The property of the magnetic needle being to point due north, whatever unsettles its position produces a wavering tremulous motion, perhaps causing it to diverge greatly from its right aim, but never inducing it to fix, to *rest*, until it has recovered that position. How truly, how strikingly does this portray the state of a heart, which, having been touched by the magnet of Divine love, finds its point of attraction in Christ, and can, by the force of that attraction, without any visible aid, remain steady, as though bound by many cords, looking to him alone. Hold forth to such a believer any other refuge, any other hope, and it is as when you suddenly reverse a mariner's compass: the needle surprised for an instant out of its right point, hurries round, eagerly seeking that from which it had been involuntarily diverted, and again settling with undeviating precision. So the heart, rightly influenced, starts away from any suggestion that would alienate it from its Lord, exclaiming, as it flies to him, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire beside thee." In proportion, also, to the force and abruptness of the foreign and momentary impulse, is the jealous speed with which it is resisted and overcome. Has not the Christian felt his heart, as it were, spring back to Jesus, with somewhat of indignant velocity, when aught else has been set forth as a source of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, or redemption to him?

But there is another species of distress much more trying than this. We sometimes see the compass, from being held in an unsteady hand, communicating to the needle a constant trembling motion, so that, while pointing aright, it still does not rest. This uneasy appearance gave rise to the poetical comparison already alluded to, and illustrates a state of mind familiar to multitudes of God's children. Peace and ease they cannot be said to know, being kept continually doubting whether they do indeed look unto Jesus in the way that he would have them. Conscience bears them witness that they are looking to nothing else; that they neither seek nor

wish for rest in any other quarter; and that the desire of their souls is to make him their chief joy: but, either through infirmity of faith or knowledge, or else from having their minds and spirits unconsciously affected by bodily ailment, or from other causes foreign to their will, and beyond their control, they continue trembling, doubting, desponding. Not having a steady and clear view of Christ, they question their interest in him; these distressing doubts deaden and distract their prayers; such dead, distracted prayers farther obscure their already embarrassed view; and so the heart, uncertain of its portion, and tempted to look more to its own wavering frame, than to Him who cannot waver, and substituting feeling for faith,

"Turns at the touch of joy or woe,
And turning, trembles too."

There is a spiritual joy, and a spiritual woe, alike inimical to spiritual peace and ease. Excitement, on the one hand, will, in religion as in other things, produce a state of collapse, the more overwhelming from the contrast connected with it. Overmuch sorrow will swallow up the comforts that God has provided for his mourning children, and be nothing the better for them. Extreme depression certainly wrongs the Lord, though it is, perhaps, a safer state than undue elation; and peace, rest, ease, are found only in such a fixed view of Christ, as presents him constantly to the soul as Him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, out of whose fulness we have received whatever is ours, although it be but the knowledge of our emptiness, and may demand whatsoever we require, on the strength of that promise, "My God shall supply all your need, according to the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus." It is no uncommon thing for the Christian to sit down and number over his gifts, until he forgets that he is still, in himself, wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked; or else to stretch himself along in utter despondency, restraining prayer for more, because he feels that as yet he has received but little in comparison with the acquirements of others, and his own desires. The heart may be "like the needle true" to its own sugges-

tions and misgivings; but let it be true to Christ alone, and it shall know both peace and ease, in the consciousness that he is pledged, for time and eternity, to be its strength, its portion, its sufficiency, its ALL-

THE COVERT.

ATTENDING lately some lectures on electricity, I was struck by the earnestness with which the speaker dissuaded his auditors from yielding to the temptation of taking refuge under an oak, during a thunder-storm. He described this king of the forest as being the most unsafe of all apparent shelters, from its peculiar tendency to attract the electric fluid; illustrating, by experiments, the fearful consequences of the invited shock. The subject long occupied my mind, giving rise to reflections of more deep and solemn interest than the apprehensions of mere bodily destruction could excite.

When the judgments of the Lord are abroad upon the earth, when the thunder of his reproof is heard, and the lightning of his awakened wrath flashes before the startled eye of man, the sinner, conscience-struck, will look around, seeking a covert from the storm. In less alarming seasons he found a shelter that seemed to answer all his purposes—some system of man's devising; a stately specimen, it may be of the wisdom that is from beneath. A religion of forms, and words, and sentiments, has perhaps often helped to ward off the little peltings of a passing cloud, and moderated, or seemed to moderate, the scorching rays of temptation. It has helped to keep him externally decent; while others, who lacked such a shelter, walked about openly discomfited and defiled. Why should he now question its powers of defence? In vain is he cautioned, in vain admonished, that he trusts in a refuge of lies, and, by so doing, hastens to a swifter and more sure destruction. He credits not the warning voice; he clings to his old covert, his own righteousness, his moral respectability, his stated duties of lip-service and will-worship; and there he abides, until the fiery bolt descends, cleaving his vain defence, and smiting him with everlasting destruc-

tion. Such is the miserable end of him who seeks, by the works of the law, to be justified before God.

And who shall then be safe when the quiver of the Almighty is scattered around and the dart of vengeance seems pointed at each guilty bosom? *He* shall be safe, who, rejecting all that earth can offer, renouncing all that flesh can do, goes forth into an unsheltered space, and casts himself upon the Lord alone. Does he dread the hand upraised to smite?—the shadow of that hand is his only hiding-place. O, let him but behold in it the hand that was nailed to the cross on Calvary; the hand from which trickled a crimson stream to wash away his sin; and, though it grasp the lightning that shall consume every unbeliever, it has no terrors for him. He knows that the briars and thorns, yea, the oaks and palaces that man confides in, are but set in array against God, provoking him to go through and consume them; but he who flies to Jesus, and, in the boldness of simple faith, takes hold of his strength, shall find that in him is perfect security. Appointed to be the Judge of all men, Christ is terrible indeed to those who reject his rule. Rocks and mountains shall vainly be invoked to hide from the wrath of the Lamb such as now make light of his message of love. For them, all the terrors of the broken law remain; and from its vengeance nothing can shield them. But equally true it is, that to the humble believer this awful Judge is the surest of advocates; and the very power that makes him terrible to others, seals the confidence of his children. They know him as one mighty to save; they know that, towards them,

"He hath still'd the law's loud thunder,
He hath quench'd Mount Sinai's flame."

In the hour of elementary strife, nature leads us to the lofty tree, while reason brings many plausible arguments to recommend such a shelter; but when science has revealed the peril of fleeing to it, he must be indeed infatuated who prefers not the open plain. In like manner, nature and carnal reason oppose the act of confiding faith, as the very madness of enthusiastic folly, and would fain persuade us to turn to some refuge of man's contriving; but the light of revelation, directed to our

hearts by the Holy Spirit, exhibits the danger of such a course; and the believer, strengthened with might by that Spirit in the inner man, goes forth to meet his Lord, seeking no covert but the strong tower of his adorable name.

BOWING AT THE NAME OF JESUS.

Among the innovations that are perpetually creeping in, changing the customs, and invading the institutions of our forefathers, who, after all, were, perhaps a little wiser than their descendants, I am often grieved to witness the growing neglect of a most seemly and reverential observance,—bowing at the name of Jesus, when reciting the creeds of our Church. One might naturally expect, that, in days when infidelity rears its brazen front with impudence unparalleled, when blasphemies abound, and scoffers walk on every side insensible to rebuke, the people of Christ would wax more jealous—would become more tenacious of every badge distinguishing them as the worshippers of an insulted Lord. New light, however, seems to have broken in upon some of them, which I do not believe to have come from heaven, whencesoever else it may have emanated; teaching them that now is the time to relax in those points—the season to rob the Lord of those outward demonstrations of respect, which his enemies (who have no idea of spiritual service) delight to see withdrawn from him. "It is too popish," say some of these defaulters; "it is a mere bodily exercise, which profiteth little." Craving your pardon, my good friends, it is not popish. Popery yields little honour to Jesus: his name is not referred to in her services nearly so often as those of other mediators; his work is undervalued—his glory tarnished. He is not even once mentioned either in the confession or the absolution of that unhappy church. It is true, his image, and that of his cross, are exhibited as objects of idolatrous worship, and that to them a genuflexion is performed; but we, when, by doing reverence at the mention of his adorable name, as Jesus Christ, the Father's only Son, and our Lord, we enter a solemn public protest against the blasphemies of Socinianism, no more approximate

to popish superstition, than we do when verbally acknowledging the grand doctrine of the Triune Jehovah, which the church of Rome has never renounced. Popery is that which once was Christianity, now corrupted, defiled, and rendered void by man's traditions and commandments. Protestantism is Christianity, rescued and REFORMED upon the perfect model of Scripture. Our beautiful liturgy is no other than the Romish prayer-book, purged of all that the craft and subtlety of the devil, or man, had introduced to pollute a pure worship; and those who object to the beautiful symbol of the liquid cross marked on the brow of the baptised, "in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end;" they who stiffen the neck and knee when an assembled congregation presses, as it were, into the participation of what, either as a privilege or a menace, is proclaimed to the whole universe, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow,—are in some peril of losing a substance, in their eager grasp after a shadowy spirituality.

Our rubric enjoins kneeling during the supplicatory portions of the service; and fast and far are our congregations departing from that command. Yet no man can have the face to assert that the bodily exercise of kneeling is not enjoined or implied as a duty throughout the New Testament; enforced, too, by the example of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. I do not know, because I have never tried, and I trust in God I never shall be induced to try, what degree of devotional feeling accompanies a sitting position, during the worship of my heavenly King; but I very much question the advantages of such demeanour. While we remain in the body, we cannot sever the intimate connexion subsisting between the outward act and inward thought; and it does appear an odd way of obeying the apostolic exhortation, "glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his," to attempt such disjunction of mind and matter, just where we are admonished specially to unite them in the service, and surely in

the worship of God. To deny, or indeed to curtail, the homage of the body, in order to exalt that of the soul, is going against universal experience, and against the tenor of His injunctions, who knows better what is in man than man himself does.

To me, I confess, it is a very delightful moment of realization, in regard to the privileges of church-membership, when brethren and sisters, with one accord, do outward homage to the name of HIM who, in taking their nature upon him, never ceased to be God over all, blessed for ever. It is very meet that flesh, which he deigned to take into communion with Deity, should, with lowly and external reverence, hail God manifest in the flesh. "Jesus Christ our Lord," are words of mighty, of immeasurable import. The Saviour, the Anointed, our Saviour, our God, the Captain of our salvation, the Head of his body the church, which body (at least in profession) are we. It was he who wore our form, who bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows; who walked our earth a persecuted, afflicted man; who hung on the cross to atone for our sins; descended into the grave, that it might become the gate of life to us; and now, in the majesty of his eternal glory, visits our temples, and hearkens to our prayers. Let those who can, deny him the poor tribute of grateful reverence; so long as I have power to bend a muscle, my knee shall bow, in deep and willing adoration, at the glorious and beloved NAME of JESUS CHRIST my LORD.

THE LOVE OF MONEY.

ONE of several things that are "too hard for me," and which I cannot by any means comprehend, is the passion thus designated in Scripture, with the awful character superadded, that it is "the root of all evil." I can readily conceive that money, as a means of procuring other gratifications, may be coveted almost beyond bounds. He who has a full purse may cast his eyes over every stall in Vanity Fair, and select whatever pleases them. He may command all that tends to fulfil "the desires of the flesh and of the mind," in the worst sense of their

corrupt cravings; he may take a nobler range, and minister out of his substance to the temporal necessities of his poorer brethren; or he may ascend yet higher ground, and, the love of Christ constraining him, scatter the bread of life in the way of famishing souls. That the possession of money, therefore, should appear to men of all characters a desirable good, so far as to render a cautionary injunction needful even to the holiest of God's people, is natural enough. But there is a form sometimes taken by this money-loving principle that equally amazes and disgusts me, when found among those who profess more than nominal Christianity; while, in all cases, it is unspeakably contemptible and revolting to common sense. I mean the passion for hoarding money.

When a person lays by a sum, without any intention of spending it, and without any defined object of future usefulness to other individuals, is it, can it be of more value to him than an equal quantity of the dust that lies upon the earth's surface, or of pebbles that glitter in the brook? "Thou fool!" is the recognised title of him who lays up much goods for many years, in order to take his fill, to eat, drink, and be merry. Thou knave! may be safely superadded, when the wretched being grasps at gold, that it may lie by and canker, and the rust thereof be a witness against him; while the poor cry unto the Lord for lack of what he hoards in darkness. Still, the miser exercises a species of self-denial—preposterous and wicked indeed, but self-denial nevertheless—and that is a thing not voluntarily submitted to by many. Such characters do cross my path, and I gaze after them and marvel; but the number is fearfully great of those who come within the meaning of the text, and whose love of money, though they hoard it not, is a prolific root of evil, sprouting forth on all sides.

When I see a child, with a penny in his hand or pocket, carelessly glance at the half-naked figure and wan countenance of another child, crying for bread, while he retains his penny, in the cherished prospect of the cake or toy-shop, where he hopes to barter it for some superfluous in-

dulgence, I behold the unfolding germ of what will become a very evil tree.

When I mark a purchaser striving to beat down the humble dealer, who, perhaps, consents to be robbed rather than lose a customer, I find the tree in blossom—and what blossoms! Often have I witnessed a scene that crimsons my cheek with the blush of shame and indignation: some poor, industrious creature offering for sale a few baskets, or some other little work of ingenuity, the pale face and gaunt figure bearing witness how important the trifle at which the article is priced must be to the seller; while the buyer, who would not miss thrice the sum, stands chaffering and "beating down" the distressed vender, until she carries off the article at half its value, and glories in her disgraceful "bargain." This does not always result from the love of money; for I have seen the pence so unfeelingly withheld from an industrious artizan, carelessly flung, within a few minutes afterwards, to some sturdy vagrant, who roared out his appeal to the very questionable charity of the donor. A scene in a stage-coach I never can forget: we were waiting for the moment of starting, when a poor woman, evidently in the last stage of consumption, offered some fine oranges at the door for sale. One of the passengers commenced bargaining (I hate the very word), and succeeded in tantalizing the distressed creature until she emptied her whole store into his lap, with a despairing look, for what I, who had often filled a basket for such perishing outcasts, well knew to be *far* beneath the prime cost of the fruit; and as, while replacing his weighty purse, he chuckled and bragged over his capital bargain, I could hardly refrain from telling him that, by withholding the little profit on her stock, he had left that almost dying woman destitute of the means of replenishing it; and had, perhaps, wrested the morsel from the lips of a starving family. Oh, the love of money, taking this shape, slays many a victim among the honest poor; driving many more to crime and irretrievable ruin!

The love of money, under a very specious form, sometimes creeps into even our best religious societies, inducing their

managers to put the tempting idol in the place of God, where their funds are concerned. "Let us secure ample means, and God will bless our labours," is the, perhaps unconscious, error of those, who ought rather to say, "Let us seek God's blessing, and the means will be given." For this we have distinct warrant in Scripture; and it is lamentable to observe how little is looked for in simple faith, how much laboured for with confidence in fleshly wisdom and might, where we should expect the very reverse of this rule. If we could but get our minds fully impressed with the conviction, that the love of money is the root of all evil, we should detect and baffle the enemy at many points where he now carries on successful assaults, which we shall only discover by their consequences, when, perhaps, it is too late.

THE HOUR-GLASS.

THE perfection to which our modern mechanics have carried the art of watch and clock-making, with the abundance, and comparative cheapness, of those useful auxiliaries, has rendered the simple and once popular hour-glass quite a rarity among us. Perhaps its scarceness is one recommendation; for our proud, impatient spirits, ever athirst for something new and strange, spurn at what is abundant and common. One of my earliest recollections leads me to the modest dwelling of a worthy old spinster, who followed the employment of a bonnet-maker, occasionally repairing and remodelling chintz dresses, of fabric too valuable to be thrown away, and of fashion too antique to suit the *then* modern taste. I remember her, a tall, spare figure, seated in fashion as upright as the high back of her wooden chair, and exercising despotic rule over two young damsels, apprenticed to learn the mystery of her calling. A well-boarded floor, strewn with dry yellow sand, a small square bit of carpet laid precisely in front of the white hearth-stone, a little round-table placed before the mistress and just within arm's length of the girls, and a demure tabby cat, purring on a low three-legged stool—these are all the particulars that I can avouch for, at this distance of

time; save and except an hour-glass of capacious dimensions, standing on the broad ledge of an old-fashioned casement, near the left hand of its owner, who, with quick, careful glance, failed not to detect the last sand in the act of escaping, and to reverse, in the twinkling of an eye, the silent monitor. I was, even at an infantine age, somewhat given to thought; and happy was the day to me, when I could obtain leave to go and ask our civil neighbour for a few snippings of her many-coloured materials, to eke out the wardrobe of a two-penny doll. She was no loser by it; for I was often permitted to carry a basket of fruit, or choice vegetables, from our spacious garden, to regale the old lady; and I took care so to time my visits, as to ensure being present at that adroit and interesting operation, the turning of her hour-glass.

Many years have passed since then,
Many changes have I seen;

and, from this early recollection being deeply impressed, I cannot now cast my eyes on an old-fashioned hour-glass, but it becomes identified with that of the good sempstress. I seem to view it through the long, checquered vista that lies between me and the scenes of careless childhood; and as a rapid glance scans that intervening space, the hour-glass becomes a memento more touching than any classical association could render it.

There is surely something more suitable to the stealthy lapse of time, in the noiseless and almost imperceptible fall of the sands, than in the ticking of chronometers, more practically useful. The deepening vacancy above, the rising heap beneath, and the falling away, from time to time, of that miniature mountain which gathers below—all have a meaning. I observe that the sand in the upper division of the glass, running from the centre, often leaves a hollow, producing deception as to the quantity actually subtracted. Clinging yet to the sides, it makes the vacancy look less; just as we love to deceive ourselves as to the proportion of our numbered days that has escaped. The pyramidal appearance of the sand below, as the last particles that fall produce an eminence, until, displaced by following grains, they sink into the common level, vividly repre-

sents the undue importance assumed by events while yet very recent; although, while dwelling on their magnitude, we well know that, displaced by other things, they will soon be mingled with the common mass of recollections. It were easy to moralize at great length on the subject; but I would rather spiritualize, and read the lesson in its highest, holiest sense. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." The days remaining to us we cannot number, for we know not but that our very last sand is escaping while we try to compute; but the days that are gone—O, what a testimony do they bear against us! We may have applied our time and faculties to the acquirement of wisdom, according to the general sense of the word among men; but our hearts—our most secret desires and ardent affections—how far have they been centered in the wisdom that is from above, and in "Christ, the wisdom of God?" An honest answer to this question, would send the greater number of us to the throne of grace, with the confession that we still have to be *taught* this application of heart to the purposes designed by our heavenly Father. Solomon trod the whole round of carnal and intellectual enjoyments, having his fill of all wisdom; yet how late in his long and prosperous life did he sit down to write "vanity of vanities" upon it all, and apply his *heart* to the God from whom, through the abuse of his abundant gifts, the favoured king had so deeply revolted! Let me number the days that are gone; and seeing how God has hitherto been robbed by me, let me strive to redeem the few that may still remain.

WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?

A STRIKING anecdote was related at one of the May meetings, by a clergyman from the south of Ireland, in proof of the real profit derived by some of the poorest classes from a free perusal of the word of God. At the periodical assemblage of men, generally of a very humble rank, who are employed to read the Scriptures in Irish to their poor ignorant countrymen, a series of questions are propounded by the clergymen who attend as examiners,

in order to ascertain how far the minds of these teachers are imbued with the truths that they communicate to others. One query, addressed to a very simple, unlearned man, who manifested great love for the sacred book, was to this effect: "If you were threatened with persecution and suffering for retaining your Bible, would you give it up?" A pause ensued, and the question was repeated, with a demand for some reply. "Please your reverence," said the poor fellow, "and with submission, I think that question is not rightly put." "How so? In what way would you have it expressed?" "Why, then, sir, and begging your reverence's pardon, I think you should ask me, if I was threatened with such things for keeping my Bible, OUGHT I to give it up? For, sir, how do I know what I WOULD do if I was tempted?"

Such an instance of self-knowledge, and consequently of self-distrust, in one who had received no teaching but what the Holy Spirit had communicated to his soul, conveys an impressive lesson to many who live in the constant enjoyment of every help to divine study. From whence arise the frequent and harsh judgments that Christians are heard to pass upon their fellows, if not from a confident conceit on the part of the individual, that he, in similar circumstances, would have acted more consistently, more prudently, more decisively, or in some way more suitably, than his neighbour has done? The poor Irish peasant had evidently read his Bible with more profit to himself than such persons seem to do; and a little of his experimental knowledge of the traitor within, would often appear an acquisition worth bartering many of our higher attainments to acquire. What *would* I do in such or such a case? is, in fact, a question beyond the power of any man to solve: and by flattering himself that he can solve it, he does but nourish the self-confidence of a deceived heart. What *ought* I to do? is a safe and profitable inquiry. It sends the man to his Bible and to his God. The former teaches him both his duty, and the moral incapacity under which he lies of fulfilling it, or any duty whatever, in his own strength; at the same time it refers him to a power always to be acquired by believing

prayer; it shows him his poverty, and opens at his feet a mine of wealth; it displays the feebleness of his naked hands, and gives him armour of proof—weapons wherewith he may pull down the strongholds of his enemy. I desire—because I greatly need it—to have the poor peasant's distinction ever before me, with David's prayer, "Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins;" and, in reference to those around me, the Apostle's indignant expostulation, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" The habit of censuring others goes hand in hand with that of applauding self; and it is no unprofitable exercise to watch the risings of the former inclination in our hearts, that by its guidance we may detect the latter.

O, the preciousness of that Book which is able to make the basest and most despised of our ignorant fellow-creatures wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus! This poor man had been brought up in strict and bigoted adherence to a system which throws the sinner altogether upon his own will-worship and meritorious works, for acceptance before God. Yet the entrance of that word, in its single majesty and simple truth, gave him such light as dispersed every shadow from his darkened understanding, and, taking him off from all vain dependencies, threw him entirely upon the guidance of Him who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

BOAZ.

ONE of the innumerable beauties of Scripture narrative is the bold and free, yet delicate, touch wherewith the inspired writers were enabled so to sketch the outline of a character as to bring the individual before us more vividly than a finished painting, executed by other hands, could do. In Boaz we have a striking instance of this. The short book of Ruth introduces him to us in three situations only: first, as superintending his reapers in the fields; then, as receiving his kinswoman's appeal; and, lastly, as effecting the redemption of the patrimony. Yet, brief as the recital is, I think we feel, while reading it, an intimate acquaint-

ance with Boaz, and a more than ordinary degree of respect for his character, grounded on that knowledge. There is something so decided, so manly, honourable, straightforward, and, withal, so essentially wise and judicious, in this noble specimen of an ancient believer, that we are attracted by the description, and never doubt but that, if Boaz were now living, and within our reach, we should bestow on him a large share of our confiding friendship.

The first appearance of Boaz is very striking: he comes from Bethlehem, to overlook his extensive harvest-men, and salutes them, "The Lord be with you!" a greeting not often heard in our fields from master to man. He then casts his eye on Ruth, and, having ascertained who and what she is, addresses her in language so beautifully paternal, taking at the same time such care, not only for her personal comfort, but for her fair fame, that we are constrained to share in her grateful admiration of his unexpected courtesy. Then, again, the refined delicacy of his order, privately given to the young men, to scatter in her way the corn which she came to glean, so as to increase her gains without the appearance of bestowing an alms, is a shining point in this beautiful picture. The sobriety, kindness, and rectitude of feeling, with which he answers her subsequent appeal, when lying at his feet, partakes of the same delicacy as the former; while the plain, business-like proceeding of the next day, conducted, however, with a tact that shows he was not a little interested in the nearer kinsman's anticipated refusal, completes the character; exciting in the mind a feeling of gratification, that to one so singularly loveable as Boaz should belong the high honour of being, within three generations, the parent of David.

How is it that we meet so rarely with persons of this stamp, in the daily walks of life among even the truly spiritual? There seems in Boaz a certain fearlessness of disposition that would have prevented his holding back the truth under any circumstances, whether addressing the day-labourer, the attractive young female, or the elder in the gate. I could not dovetail the character of Boaz into any plan of expediency, so much in vogue among

us; nor fancy him shrinking from the straight course in any matter, on a comparison of the probable numbers who might be with him or against him in that path. Simplicity and godly sincerity mark the man: they do not abound among us as might be wished. Personal interest, secret prejudice, and a most unworthy timidity, greatly mar the beauty of the Christian walk. When fully convinced that such or such a course is accordant with the known will of God, and likely to produce happy effects in glorifying him and promoting the cause of truth, how often do we see that open path abandoned on the strength of the miserable apprehension, "What will the world think? What will my neighbours say?" Rashness is a mischievous error; but is not fearfulness the sin of our day? Do we not regulate our proceedings, our demeanour, and discourse, rather by the rule of men's liking, than by that of their palpable need? Some, seeing their friends lukewarm and indifferent on points which, nevertheless, *they* know to be of great moment, refrain from attempting to stir them up, lest their own influence should be lessened by coming in contact with the prejudices of the other party; that is to say, they let their sword rust in the scabbard while surrounded by enemies, for fear the blade might flash too brightly in the eyes of some drowsy comrade, who prefers sleeping to fighting. Others, again, withhold their hand from doing good when fairly called upon to do it, apprehensive that some may suspect their motives, however upright they may be in the sight of Him who searcheth the hearts. This error, with a long train of consequences deducible from it, may be traced through every order of men, mar-
 rying their usefulness in the church, the senate, the profession, the family, the workshop, and, perhaps, more than all others, the press. Satan's emissaries have no such qualms; they utter fearlessly their boldest conceptions, and push the practical application of evil principles into universal operation. It is among those who have the right on their side that we trace the hesitating caution which ought rather to belong to their opponents. And what is the consequence? They discourage the zealous, impede the active, thwart their allies, and help the enemy; at the same

time earning from the former the title of time-servers, which, perhaps, they do not deserve; and from the latter, that of double-faced hypocrities, which they certainly are not.

Decision is the prominent characteristic of Boaz. He does not whisper his pious greeting in the ears of such among the reapers as he knows will value and respond to it, but proclaims his acknowledgment of, and dependence on, the Lord, through every corner of the field, so soon as he sets foot in it. He does not secretly say, "My young men will suspect something, if I manifest concern for that engaging young woman, therefore I will keep it to myself;" but lays on them an injunction, expressive of a lively interest, yea, a marked partiality, the origin of which they might not know. He does not invite the other kinsman to a private conference, and try to manœuvre him into a surrender of his right, but boldly takes his seat in the most public part of the city, and executes his honest, though clever design, before the world. The more I contemplate Boaz, the greater are my respect and affection for him; and the heartier my desires to see him acknowledged, not merely in words but by deeds, as a model for God-fearing men, in every grade of society, and every walk of life; more particularly among such as, by property or public station, possess the influence of Boaz, and whose example goes far to encourage or to reprove the timid, temporising, inconsistent spirit, that forms a wrinkle, a spot, and a blemish, on that which ought to be presented before God free from any such thing.

THE CONSTELLATION.

ONE of the first objects that attracted my infant attention was the constellation of Orion. There is no personal event of any moment within my recollection, no change in a life replete with sudden and unexpected changes that I cannot in some way connect with the principal stars of Orion. To ascertain upon a starlight night, at bedtime, what was the relevant position of my sparkling friend, ever formed a matter of careful investigation, when I happened as a child to be domiciled beyond the paternal

roof; and I believe it is the case to the present time. No scientific inquiries, no stores of astronomical knowledge, are concerned. It is one of those predilections, or involuntary associations, that neither time nor change can affect; unless, as the lapse of the one, and the bereavements of the other, draw closer the tie that endearing recollections have strengthened with every passing year. Many a wild and beautiful thought of childhood, many a romantic idea of opening youth, many a soothing reflection of riper years, seem to hang in clusters upon the magic form of Orion; revealing themselves to me, while I gaze "in dreamy mood" upon its familiar outline. In all there is a sweetness known only to such as love to look into the past: but more than the luxury of reveries I have found in that constellation.

I can realise the scene with heart-thrilling accuracy, when one glimpse of that bright phantom as it then seemed, was worth to me all the splendour of a thousand noon-day suns. My nominal home was then in another hemisphere; the Atlantic rolled between me and all that could constitute a home. Winter, such as our England knows not, nor can conceive of, had set in with a severity unusual even in that climate. At a very late hour I was returning from a scene of giddy mirth, where the laugh and the song had fettered a youthful party round the supper-table until midnight struck unheeded, and a reluctant separation sent them on their respective paths. Mine lay along a track sufficiently defined by the tread of many feet, and the pressure of many sleighs; but on either side of the unbroken, though undulating, surface of snow stretched off in the dreariest monotony imaginable. To the right it terminated in low lands, and the undistinguishable course of a river; on the left, a drift, that covered with its swell the intersecting views of wooden fence—for no hedge-rows blossom there—became by degrees level with a higher range of fields; then, sinking for a space, it rose again at the horizon, not in the flat line that marked the opposite extremity, but in those peculiar masses that show a forest, or rather an impenetrable wood of low, thick trees to be buried beneath them. We had ascended a rising ground, which shut out the cluster of

houses recently quitted; and the onward path was lost in a confused distance.

Perhaps there is no time when the mind so eagerly turns inward, to brood again over an habitual sorrow, as at the close of a sustained effort to appear light-hearted and serene. It was my case, with many aggravations, just then; and the desolateness of that frozen scenery was but a type of the dreary waste that my spirit displayed. I walked forward, endeavouring to fancy myself alone; and with gloomy satisfaction, if such a word was then admissible, I secretly claimed the character of an outcast from all that was pleasant, all that was cheering, all that was allied to joy, or hope, or consolation, in a cold and comfortless world. In this mood I looked slowly around me, then raised my eyes in listless abstraction, above the heavy line of snow-capped woods, and there, sparkling among myriads of stars, with an effulgency as indescribable as was the piercing keenness of the atmosphere, I beheld Orion.

And in Orion I beheld my distant, long-lost home; I remembered the magnificent limes that shaded my favourite walk; I saw the tall spire of the venerable minister, from behind which the constellation used to steal upon my sight; I beheld the purple clusters of the vine that mantled my father's house, and the smiling faces that rejoiced beneath them. What though the abode was now another's home, and the party scattered, and the paternal head laid low in the dust beneath that massive cathedral roof, and in the scenes that rose to my mental view I could never, never more rejoice; still, for a moment—and such a moment too, of mid-winter without and within—they were again my own, with all their sunbeams and flowers, glad looks and loving smiles. My heart beat freely, my step rose lightly; and when the short sweet vision dissolved in tears, they were tears of resignation, almost of thankfulness. Any sensation is preferable to that of a warm and loving heart striving, against its nature, to become a misanthropic icicle; and from such a wretched struggle Orion had delivered me.

It will be evident that at the time referred to, I had not learned to take heed to the light shining in a dark place, nor to watch for the rising of the day-star in

my heart. I considered the heavens the work of God's fingers, but without a reference to the vileness of man, or the amazing love of God in Christ to him. In fact, I knew neither the one nor the other. I grieved not as a sinner, but as a sufferer; and the consolation to be drawn from visible things well suited an earthly nature. Far higher and holier thoughts are now interwoven with those splendid monuments of Divine power—the architecture of the heavens. But though sin atoned for, and salvation wrought out, and an incorruptible, undefiled, unfading inheritance laid up for God's people, are the substance of the tale which the heavens are telling to earth; still a soft and shadowy recollection of all that sweetened or that saddened bygone times, cleaves to the starry forms that won my childish attention, and have hovered around my path to this hour. They are chroniclers of much that would otherwise be forgotten, and which it is profitable to remember. They tell a tale of sin, of ingratitude, rebellion, and presumptuous pride, on the one side; of long-suffering mercy, forbearance, forgiveness, and blessing, on the other; of dangers wantonly dared, and deliverances miraculously wrought. With a voice more eloquent than angel's tongue could utter, they deliver the admonitory words, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee, these forty years, in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, and whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no."

SLIEVE DONARD.

In the county Down, where the magnificent range known as the Mourne mountains terminates on the coast, there rises what may well be called the king of that giant group. Slieve Donard is nearly 3000 feet above the level of the sea at its base, abrupt in its ascent, and presenting at the highest point a dome-like elevation of extraordinary grandeur. Immediately beneath this towering summit lies the exquisitely beautiful demesne of Lord Roden, Tollymore Park; but on that side the mountain is wholly inaccessible:

a circuit of some miles must be made to reach the only track by which the ascent can be gained, and that, after a short space, disappears, leaving the traveller to his own choice, in the four hours' hard labour by which he may expect to reach the pinnacle of his ambition. And little of a traveller's soul can he possess who does not consider that attainment an abundant recompense for his toil.

Viewing Slieve Donard's height from the demesne, I had remarked what appeared an object about as large as an ordinary mile-stone, topping its crest; and, although making all reasonable allowance for the deception that so vast an altitude might occasion as to size, I was amazed to find myself within a heap of stones, the irregular outline of which might probably enclose as much ground as a moderate-sized dwelling-house stands upon. In some places the wall thus formed was several feet in thickness, and between seven and eight in height: at other points only a few scattered stones marked the boundary of the principal heap, within which was a well of excellent water, and close beside it a large slab of dark grey stone, supported by heaps of various dimensions, and formerly used as a Romish altar.

Amid the exultation that naturally followed the success of our arduous undertaking, and the enjoyment of plentiful good cheer rendered delicious by the sharp edge that fatigue and our elevated position, with the help of a rough sea-breeze, had imparted to our appetites; in spite, too, of the overpowering extent of our magnificent view, embracing England and Scotland in its range; I felt oppressed at heart, and could have stolen away—in truth, I did steal away—from the merry group, to indulge the sadness that I could not dispel. What extent of effort was requisite to bring an active unencumbered frame to that spot, I had sensible experience of in every limb and sinew; yet the stones that by hundreds and thousands lay heaped about me, many of which I could not, by any exertion, have lifted from the earth, had all been brought from the plain below by the hands of devotees to the blinding and destroying system of popery.

It cannot be doubted, that my feeling,

in the first instance, was one of deepest compassion for my deluded fellow-sinners, and increased abhorrence of that crafty device, which, by making merchandise of their souls, maintains itself in supreme power, and holds them in abject bondage. The prevailing impression, however, was of a more personal nature. I read a rebuke in every object before me. Calculating the ponderosity of the burden, the length and extreme laboriousness of the way, and considering the debility probably induced alike by the privations of poverty and the imposed exercise of fasting, how could I look upon the evidences of what a false religion could stimulate its votaries to achieve, without being struck to the heart by a consciousness of my own fearful lack of zeal and devotion in what I know to be the truth? Many a poor, emaciated creature had, "for the glory of God," as they term and consider it, borne those burdens up to the spot where I found them: how often had I, for the glory of God, encountered as large an amount of labour, suffering, and privation? Many a diseased creature had dragged his feeble, perhaps crippled, limbs and exhausted frame to the top of Slieve Donard, to plunge them in the so-called holy well, hoping to find a healing power in its spring. Alas for my careless, lagging, reluctant steps, over smooth, and even flowery paths, to bring my death-stricken soul within reach of the waters of eternal life!

The error of the poor Irish devotee consisted in attaching a notion of merit to his difficult service, and in supposing that thereby he made God his debtor to a certain amount. My sin lay in the habitual neglect of far easier duties, by the performance of which I might before men manifest somewhat of gratitude for the free gift of what the poor papist blindly toiled to purchase, and toiled to the last in vain. The conviction that struck me so deeply was this: I confess daily that it is my bounden duty to yield myself a living sacrifice to the Lord, and to love Him with all my *heart, soul, mind, and strength*. Now here is an evidence of what may be accomplished when those faculties are really and in earnest devoted to an object and an end; and what have I ever done, or attempted, even with the offered strength of Omnipotence to aid me, equal to the car-

rying of one of these stones, from the beach yonder, to this elevated spot? Bodily exercise, I know, profiteth little; and I might bring the church of New-castle, lying far below, to the crown of Slieve Donard, and be farther from the kingdom of God at the close than at the commencement of such a task; but have I ever put forth my energies, to serve God in the Gospel of his Son, with the honesty wherewith these poor people have exerted themselves to serve them which be no gods? From the depths of self-abasement I even ventured then to cast a thought beyond myself, and asked, Are Protestants, enlightened, unfettered, spiritually instructed Protestants, as much in earnest in Christ's cause as these their degraded fellow-subjects are in that of anti-christ? I fear we are too willing to act and to suffer according to the will of God, as they ignorantly are to strain every nerve in violating that will. A thousand instances in my own experience, where a little extra self-denial, a little more determined energy and perseverance in an unpleasant task, might have greatly redounded to the glory of God and the good of his people, arose to my remembrance, filling my eyes with tears, and my heart with remorse. And often, when tempted to flag in some work and labour of, God I do hope that I shall, by the Lord's blessing, find a powerful stimulus in the recollection of that broken heap of stones on the lofty summit of Slieve Donard.

THE DOG.

Of all the footmarks that betray the conquering tread of Satan over the blighted fields, originally created so fair and so good, there surely is none more unequivocally his own stamp than that of cruelty. He who has proclaimed his name, "the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious," is never more insultingly braved than when man, the creature of his hand, dares to exercise the power delegated to him for the benefit of his fellow-earthworms, in oppressing and torturing them. To a mind not hardened against all right feeling, even the gratification of surveying rare and beautiful specimens of living animals is embittered by a degree

of painful sympathy, while contrasting the narrow limits of their dungeons with the wide expanse through which they were formed to roam. I once visited the Zoological Gardens at feeding time; and, when observing the restless agitation in which a hungry lion traversed the space, where he could scarcely measure half-a-dozen steps, impatient for his miserable pittance of food, the grandeur of scriptural imagery burst upon my mind: "The lions, roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God." I fancied the same animal coming forth from his native den, beneath the shadows of evening, deepened as they were by the masses of his leafy canopy, and striding onward in unshackled majesty, bidding the rude forest echo to his roar. The contrast spoiled my evening's enjoyment.

But there is among the brute creation one race, advancing such especial claims of exemption from the general lot of oppressed inferiors, that my indignation scarcely outruns my astonishment when I see them ill-used. Hateful as are the cruelties exercised on the noble horse, on the patient ox, and harmless, timid sheep, nothing seems so base, so aggravated, as harsh treatment inflicted on the dog. From a child, I have studied the character of that faithful follower of man; and truly it is a marvellous one. The zeal, devotion, and consistency of his attachment; the palpable degree in which his faculties are sharpened by it; his patient endurance, undaunted courage, and more than "half-reasoning" sagacity, in all that concerns the interests of, perhaps, a neglectful or cruel master,—these qualities stamp with such exceeding turpitude the outrages committed through the very confidence inspired by them, that it is extraordinary a general cry of loud reprobation does not break forth to intimidate, where it might not shame, the perpetrators. Of course, I now allude to the scandalous practices of using the lesser and more delicate individuals of the species for draught; while even the sturdy mastiff and powerful Newfoundland dog are urged to painful and unnatural efforts, which their very willingness in attempting them renders it more unmanly to extort. Let any one examine the skin of this ill-requited servant, how liable it is to inflame and break on a slight injury; let him mark the perpetual thirst,

excited by any accession of heat or exercise; and then imagine a small part of what must be the suffering induced by the galling harness, the cutting lash, and the dreadful craving for drink, which the shackled condition of the poor creature prevents his satisfying, and which is rarely thought of by his selfish employer. It is really becoming a national sin among us; and no sin will more surely find its perpetrators out, or visit them more fearfully in this world.

Canine madness will undoubtedly increase to such an extent, under the barbarous system, as to make the extirpation of the race a matter of public safety. And, partial as I am to the dog, I would rather see his name and nature blotted out from the page of creation, than witness what is now a common spectacle wherever we turn the eye. Declaiming is useless; a determined effort ought to be made by every one who does not desire to lose the honest guardian of his property, the playful companion of his walk, and the most attached of his adherents, to put down this disgusting and dangerous nuisance.

That "the righteous man regardeth the life of his beast," we know. Gentleness, a fruit of the Spirit, is utterly opposed to every harsh and cruel action; and I should feel no happy assurance of that man's Christian walk, who could look on with indifferent eye, or content himself with a passing expression of disapproval, when such barbarity is inflicted on an animal more friendly to man than man is to his fellow, more humbly confiding towards man than man is towards his God.

I have seen the dog freely used for draught under circumstances perfectly justifiable. A peculiar breed, broad-chested, thick-set, and every way fitted for the task of drawing the light sleigh over the glassy surface of fixed ice, or where the deep snow-bed would not bear the rugged tread and bulky weight of a horse, are thus employed in Canada. Trained for the work, abundantly supplied, and considerably apportioned, those northern dogs furnish not a precedent for, but a striking contrast to, the abuse of their dissimilar kindred in our stony streets and dusty roads, beneath the oppressive heat of summer. If discouragement in

every form were given to those who are guilty of it, by refusing to purchase their wares, or in any way to employ them, a salutary check might be applied, the harmless sufferer delivered, and one foul blot wiped out from the checkered page of our national iniquity.

THE SNARE.

It is a fearful thing to contemplate the power of Satan, and his skill in making our bodily senses the means of leading our souls away from God. Of all traitors, he is rightly considered the worst, who lifts against his lawful king the arms that king has given him to employ in his service. And surely, of all criminals he is the most guilty, who makes the good gifts of God the actual instruments of rebellion against the Giver. I was led to these reflections a short time since, when, in passing a Romish chapel, on my return from worshipping in a parish church, I saw at the gate a string of carriages belonging to Protestant families; and learnt that, in consequence of some fine professional singers having been engaged to perform there, these people were induced to sanction, by their presence, the idolatrous service of the mass.

Does any reader question the justice of the charge of idolatry thus brought against the Romish church? Surely the act of falling prostrate in adoration before the little cake which the priest elevates, and which that church avers to be changed, by the utterance of certain words, into the body, soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ, is at least as flagrant an act of idolatry as that of the Israelites of old, who made a molten calf, and professed to worship Jehovah under the symbol. Their sin was visited by an immediate and extensive judgment, marking the Lord's abhorrence of what he has so strictly forbidden. Nor is the consecrated wafer the only object of such prohibited adoration: the virgin Mary, the saints and angels, are addressed in language of prayer and praise, such as it is clearly idolatrous to use to any created being. No one can turn over the leaves of a popish prayer-book without seeing that it

was for no imaginary or trivial cause our blessed reformers laid down their lives. They contended for the faith once delivered to the saints; and were content to die, rather than to dishonour their God by doing the abominable thing which he hates. The very name of Protestant originated in a solemn protest made by the first reformers against these deadly errors of an apostate church: and it would be difficult to show its applicability to any who, by their conduct, renounce such protest.

But the church of Rome, deeply versed in unholy arts, has ever adorned herself with such things as fall in with the course of man's corrupt affections. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, there find abundant gratification. In the present instance, the charm of a little fine music was tried as a snare; and it was, alas! found effectual in drawing several away from that solemn and scriptural service, in which the open doors of their own church invited them to join on the Lord's day. It induced them to look on, and thereby seemingly to approve, while the Holy Spirit was grieved, and Christ dishonoured, by the delusive mockeries of a worship openly addressed far more to the creature than the Creator. Was this to let their light shine before men, as the Lord has commanded? Was this "having compassion" on the deluded souls of their fellow-creatures? Was this exposure of their own souls to the influence of the same delusion, a fit sequel to their morning prayer—"Lead us not into temptation?" Or, supposing them sufficiently guarded by their better knowledge from the danger of being led astray, was the example thus set to their servants and ignorant neighbours consistent with the prohibition against putting a stumbling-block in another's way? These questions passed in solemn thought through my mind as I walked on, reflecting how many have recently been called away, even in the prime of life, from this uncertain world; and how very few Sabbaths might remain to some of those who were thus defrauding God of the honour due unto his name, and wantonly mis-spending the sacred hours; gratifying their senses by hearing hymns melodiously sung to the praise of those who would indignantly

rebuke such worshippers with—"See thou do it not."

The Holy Ghost, speaking by St. Paul, has given a short, simple, perfect rule to guide us. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This appears a hard saying to some; but it is a sweet saying to those who have tasted and seen how gracious the Lord is. Such will desire to wear it as a frontlet between their eyes—yea, to have it so written on their hearts, that not all the cravings of unhallowed curiosity, stimulated by the crafty devices of the god of this world, shall prevail to turn their steps aside from the path of consistent obedience to their Father's loving commands.

THE BURDEN.

WALKING along a hilly road the other day, I observed a young girl, apparently about sixteen, carrying a large bucket of grains, as I supposed, from a brewery not far behind us, to replenish the trough of her pig, or to fatten her fowls. There was something painful in the continued effort with which the poor girl ascended the path. The right arm was evidently on the full stretch downwards, while the left was no less forcibly extended horizontally, to assist, with body and neck inclined in the same direction, in affording a counterpoise to the heavy weight that dragged her earthward. After a while, she rested for breath, placing her bucket on the ground, and her hands to her hips, as if to relieve the overstrained muscles so severely taxed; then, at the foot of a higher ascent, she resumed the load, and proceeded more painfully than before.

At this juncture a girl, considerably less than herself, who was loitering near a gate on the road, accosted her, and after a short parley, going round to the other side of the bucket, she also took the handle; and thus sharing the burden between them, they trotted along, with countenances and manner so changed that I could not but mark them: the expression of fatigue and vexation on the aspect of the burdened traveller gave place to one of sprightly satisfaction, while that of the helper, before vacant and lifeless, bright-

ened with animation as they chatted away. The weary step of one, and the lazy lounge of the other, were alike succeeded by a light and lively pace; and I hardly know which was most pleasant to witness, the relaxed outline of the overworked arm, or the vigorous movement of that which had just been folded in useless inactivity. My pace being slow, they soon outstripped me, and, turning off into a lane, were presently out of sight. Not so the lesson conveyed: it was one that we all require to learn anew very frequently, for it illustrated a text of daily and almost hourly applicability in every station of life: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

Revolving in my mind this little incident, I traced in the unoccupied girl a resemblance to many well-meaning Christians, who, relieved at the moment from any heavy pressure on their own strength or fortitude, stand by, as it were, to remark how their fellows proceed under some present weight; but it must be confessed that the contemplation is not always followed up by an extension of prompt assistance. The duty of burden-bearing is admitted by all who acknowledge the authority of the Gospel, but it is too much confined to what the Lord sees good to lay upon us—too little considered with a reference to the precious text above quoted. Few will refuse to lend the aid that is asked of them; but they are not very many who will step out of their own path to proffer help when it is not demanded of them, although that proffer is, in a multitude of cases, the principal part of the benefit conferred. I saw plainly that a very small portion of the actual weight of the bucket was transferred to the smaller girl; but she put her hand to it with hearty good will; and the companionship, the practical sympathy thus afforded, administered such a cordial to the other, that I doubt not it lightened the load in a far greater degree than if two-thirds of the contents of the bucket had been subtracted, and the remainder left for her to bear alone.

Nothing would so sweeten the intercourse of God's people on earth as a diligent cultivation of this principle and habit. A thousand occasions for bearing a brother's burden pass by unimproved, be-

cause unmarked, by us; while he, perhaps, marks them, and is pained by the omission. To comfort the feeble-minded, to lift up the hands that hang down, to bear the infirmities of the weak, is an office that the meanest, the most inexperienced, may easily perform, and in so doing confer a lasting benefit on themselves. There are some professors who appear as a sort of gladiators on the scene, ambitious to exhibit their own powers of endurance, and still more, of infliction, and rather to take advantage of a brother's comparative feebleness for that purpose, than to impart to him of the gift that they have received. Such, while wounding their weaker brethren, break the law of Christ, and inflict a blow on his cause. The superiority, whether openly vaunted of or silently displayed, becomes a reproach, and often produces in the mind of the harassed individual a secret murmuring against the will of Him, who, in severally dividing his gifts according to that mysterious will, leaves one in poverty, that another may minister to him out of his abundance. Our proud hearts generally contrive to discover something in ourselves whereof to glory; and in that one thing we should ever be most watchful that we offend not. A man of strong reasoning powers will be tempted to seek victory in an argument with one not so well exercised in that line—nay, to court an argument, in the anticipation of triumph, perhaps at the sacrifice of that unity of spirit which he stately prays for. One whose views of doctrinal truth are deep and clear, will frequently be beguiled into increasing the perplexity of a hesitating mind, and quenching the light that does but glimmer in comparison with the clear beam of his own, in order to display the latter in all their brightness; forgetting, perhaps, that there may be much light with little heat, or none; and that the clearest head may be joined to a heart in the Laodicean state, which the Lord accepts not. A fluent talker on spiritual matters will exceedingly dishearten one who may secretly, though needlessly, fear that his own lack of words proceeds from lack of love; and a disposition naturally phlegmatic, assuming the appearance of being fixed on the sure foundation, beyond the power of passing events to affect his settled

repose of mind, will break the bruised reed that quivers in every breeze. In any of these cases, or in the numerous varieties that belong to the same class, is the burden borne, or the law of Christ fulfilled?

Apart from these, there is the selfishness that, without aspiring to shine at any one's expense, is too much wrapped in its own concerns or enjoyments, to take thought, practically, for those of another. They would help if called on—at least, so they say, or think; but as to going out of their way, they see no occasion for that. And as those who most need sympathy are generally the slowest at asking it, this class rarely find occasion to exert themselves. The Christian's duty is to tread in the steps of his Master, who was found of them that sought him not; and to give unasked that which, alike unasked and undeserved by him, he has received of God. How far the outstretched hand of offered assistance, the tone of sympathy, and the step of kind companionship, will go in lightening the heaviest burdens, and cheering the most care-worn mind, they alone know who have both needed and found such fellow-helpers on a toilsome road; and, in like manner, the richness of the recompense internally enjoyed by the conscious succourer, is only to be ascertained by experiment. There is not in the whole Bible a precept, the fulfilment of which does not bring gladness to the heart that obeys it; and perhaps among them all, as there is none more imitative of the Lord Jesus in its object, so there is none that in its application more directly insures the twofold blessing than that which says, "Bear ye one another's burdens."

THE HID TREASURE.

AN affecting incident, lately told in a company where I was present, has dwelt on my thoughts ever since. It is highly characteristic of the place, the people, and the times that belong to it.

Private intelligence having been received that in a certain wild district, inhabited by the poorer class of peasants, in Ireland, arms were collected and concealed, for unlawful purposes, a party of

military were despatched, to make a sudden search in the suspected houses. Among others, they visited a poor cabin, inhabited, seemingly, by very quiet, inoffensive people, where, after a most careful searching, they could find no trace of what they sought. When on the point of departing, one man remarked that the unequal, rough stone which served as a sort of hearth, wore the appearance of having recently been moved; the earth about it was loose, and the stone seemed to have been hastily laid down. This revived their suspicion, and they promptly lifted the rude flag from its place, and saw under it a parcel, carefully wrapped up in some poor ragged covering. Here was a prize! How many pike-heads, how many pistols, or what quantity of ammunition, they had seized, was matter of conjecture, as they carefully unfolded the envelope. This was done; and the captors held in their hands—an Irish Bible.

The fact needs no elucidation: every body knows, that for a poor Irishman to possess the word of God is high treason against the church of Rome; and that any offence given to the priesthood of that church, in a popish district, is speedily punished with the loss of the little all of the helpless victim. The Bible, if discovered would be burned, drowned, buried, or thrust into some inaccessible corner, while a terrible penance would await the possessor of such a contraband article; and any resistance thereto would incur the curse of excommunication, with all its subsequent terrors of ceaseless persecution, and temporal ruin. This must be avoided if possible, by the poor creature who has no earthly refuge to flee to, and, as yet, too feeble an apprehension of divine realities to endure as seeing Him who is invisible. Still the Bible—"the story o' pace" as the simple Irish rightly call it—which has told him, in his own loved tongue, such things as never before entered his thoughts, to cheer him in his sad, laborious pilgrimage on earth,—the Irish Bible once received, is hard, very hard, to give up. And so the trembling possessors looked around their poverty-stricken abode, and finding no place where it might be secure from the prying gaze of bigoted enmity, they took up the single stone, that varied the damp surface of

their cabin-floor—generally the earth on which it stands—and there deposited the treasure. When night arrived, the door was secured, the aperture called a window blocked up, and the precious Bible, taken from its resting place, was read by such imperfect light as they could manage to afford. And this within the actual circuit of the British isles—this in the heart of Protestant Britain, the very throne of freedom! But I leave that subject; and turn from the cruel necessity of hiding it, to the treasures so hidden.

"Man," since he became a transgressor in Adam, "is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward;" and the richest gift to man is fitted, in all its bearings, to bring consolation; so proving that it was intended for a suffering race. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people," is the tenor of all that is addressed to those who shall receive the word; and few of full age are brought to do so, except under the pressure of some severe distress, whether of body, mind, or circumstances. "The whole need not a physician, but they which are sick," has a meaning deeply felt by such as know the plague of their own hearts; and I cannot tell whether the simple incident of the Bible under the stone affected me most on the point of my own comparative indifference for the rich possession, or of my lukewarmness in the work of distributing it to others. True, if there was danger of its being wrested from me, I should not be slack in seeking means to secure the treasure; but I do not avail myself of the undisturbed blessing as I might. An excellent clergyman, the Dean of Ardagh on his examination before the House of Lords on the Irish anti-scriptural education scheme, made the remark, "I never met with a Roman Catholic who came to have any knowledge of the Scriptures, but that knowledge increased beyond any thing we see among Protestants." This may be partly accounted for by the increased effect of light when shining where deep darkness has long prevailed; the avidity with which he who has been obliged to feed on husks, will devour wholesome, nutritious bread; and also by the fact of the treasure being better appreciated when its loss is daily apprehended. But am I not also blind and famished, and poor in the midst of my abundance, from

neglecting to use the light, the feast, the riches, so freely placed within my reach? It is a solemn inquiry; because the Lord will not pass over the neglect of one, while he marks the diligence of another, in respect of his great gift.

And what a plea is here for increased zeal in circulating this blessed book! A few pence in the purchase, a little thought and exertion in the giving of a Bible, may bring life to the dead in a whole family—a whole district. Ask the poor, toil-worn labourer, who has found in those pages wine and milk without money and without price, what he will sell them for? Ask the desolate widow, who there has found a heavenly husband—the sorrowing mother, who has learned there the way by which she may surely go at last to the child that cannot return to her—the transgressor, who had long felt his sins to be a burden too heavy for him to bear, and who has received in the Gospel the rest which Christ alone can give to the weary and heavy-laden,—ask these the same question, and then judge what you are withholding from their companions, in sorrow, by neglecting to give, yea, to force upon them, the blessing which as yet they know not, or value not. Recently, I was reproved by my own earnestness in persuading a person who had received some trifling hurt, to apply a remedy, the efficacy of which I greatly confided in. The thought would occur, “This poor creature has a far deeper and more dangerous wound, which admits but of one cure; I have the recipe, I know its infallible power; and why do I not with equal, or greater importunity, press its application here?” O that we could number our sins of omission, remembering that “to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” A multitude of these transgressions are not even acknowledged, far less repented of, so much is the heart hardened and the conscience seared through neglect of that command so repeatedly, so solemnly enforced, “Watch.” How can we suffer one poor fellow-sinner to lack the treasure which would enrich us in the giving, as well as him in the receiving of it?

LOST TIME.

It is a hackneyed subject, but one of such growing importance in the history of each individual, that too much stress can hardly be laid on it. The simple fact of a past hour being totally irrecoverable, would alone stamp it with awful interest; but when to this is added the equally certain truth that it has not passed unmarked or unrecorded by the Most High, and that what is our loss is also our theft, a robbery committed against Him,—we may well mourn the past, and watch unto prayer for a right use of the future.

Time-losers form a very considerable majority in the upper classes of society, and no small proportion even among those on whose daily labour their daily bread depends. The former, by late rising, by lingering at the toilet and over the breakfast and dinner-table, squander so many hours, that they may almost be said not to live out half their days, such inaction being unworthy of the name of life. When to this is added the frivolous employments of what are termed morning calls, the needless lounging in shops, and the utterly useless occupation of writing letters full of gossip and egotism, it is fearful to calculate the amount of the robbery. The humbler sort of people appear, on a comparison with these, to pass a life of incessant labour; but they too are chargeable with much sinful waste of what they are equally bound to improve, though happily exempt from many of the temptations that assail others. Are we, then, to stigmatise as criminal the occasional relaxation of mind and body, that experience shows is necessary to the health of both? By no means: we do wrong when neglecting to ensure it to ourselves, and to those under our authority, or within our influence. Rest and recreation too are among the blessings provided for us, and which we have no right to reject. Unbelief alone can lead us to sacrifice them to an over-anxious care for the morrow's supply; and I do not consider the time so spent as being *lost*, any more than the moments which the mechanic sets apart for sharpening the tools necessary to his especial work, are lost to him. Deduct from all unemployed hours a fair propor-

tion for such rest and refreshment, and account only for the remainder,—it will prove a formidable arrears.

“I am always employed in one way or another,” is the remark frequently heard from busy idlers, who fancy that, so long as their bodies are not stretched on a couch, or their hands folded before them, they may be said to be up and doing. But what is it to be employed? Johnson defines the word “business,” object of labour. We have, therefore, only to inquire, what is men’s business in the world? what is the object pointed out to them as most worthy to be laboured for? If they be of the Israel of God, the answer is given by him, “This people have I formed for myself, that they may show forth my praise.” If they be not of that Israel, O how awfully startling is the cry of every squandered hour while they linger unmindful of the thrilling call, “Escape for thy life; flee to the mountain!” *That* is lost time in which the follower of Christ does nothing to glorify his Master; and *that* is lost time, involving a lost eternity too, wherein the soul that has not yet found peace through the blood of the cross, does nothing towards seeking and finding it. That the angels of God take a lively interest in the concerns of our world, is unequivocally shown in Scripture; and often do I think with what wonder and indignation these heavenly creatures, who, for ages that we cannot number, have been serving the Lord day and night, with an eternity of such joyous service still before them, must look on man. Limited, at the utmost stretch of his mortal existence, to a few fleeting years, to work out his own salvation, and to glorify God, who works in him both to will and to do, man, who might be expected to number his moments as a miser numbers his golden pieces when compelled to deal them out, will fling away hours, days, months, years, as though he too had an eternity in possession, with no object but to gratify his own capricious will. Surely these two words, *LOST TIME*, will be found engraven on the gates of hell.

What is the remedy? For the past, none, save in the cleansing stream of a Saviour’s blood, washing out the sin. For the present and future, “looking unto Je-

sus,” in a three-fold light, is the remedy. Look to him as an example; watch his course when on earth, going about doing good; speaking words of heavenly truth, warning, invitation, consolation, to all around; finding it meat and drink to do the will of his Father. Look to him as able to supply all your need, to overcome your besetting sin, to strengthen and cheer you in the struggling race. Look to him as the end and object of that race; as the great arbiter, holding forth the crown of life, not as a reward for the victor’s exertion, but as the free gift of his own grace, the purchase of his merit, the token of a love for which the devotion of every energy, feeling, word, and thought to his service, is so poor and mean an acknowledgment, that the same mercy which impels him to confer the boon, can alone induce a reception of our praiseful thanksgivings.

THE CANADIAN LAKE.

DURING a very severe winter in British North America, I was much delighted to trace all the splendid phenomena of frost and thaw. The intensity of the first was inconceivable by any who have not experienced it; consequently a description would, to some readers, be incredible. The beauty and magnificence displayed in many instances through the operation of the latter, were captivating. On one occasion, I was watching the struggle between a full volume of water flowing in from the sea, through the channel of a noble river, and the blocks of ice that, though broken, still disputed the passage; and tracing the process by which, as I knew, the grand rivers of that region were cleared of their obstructions, I called to mind a small, beautiful lake, embosomed in the woods a few miles from my dwelling, and so completely land-locked, that it was impossible for the broken ice to find an outlet. I also knew the depth and solidity of the congealed mass, and that it must require a length of time to dissolve such a body where woods and hills overshadowed it from the sun’s ray. Mentioning this difficulty to a friend, he gave me the following solution:—

“The lake of which you speak, and

others like it, are frozen more deeply and firmly than you suppose; and if no method of removing the ice, except by dispersion or solution, had been provided, the dwellers in their vicinity would be in a pitiable plight. But a most extraordinary phenomenon, such as you would never imagine, is connected with the subject, and I will endeavour to describe it. As the season advances for setting the waters free, the surface of the frozen lake is observed to become porous; and this increases, until it almost resembles a honey-comb. Some indications are then perceived round the edges, so well understood by the surrounding people, that they can calculate with tolerable exactness when the expected event will take place, and many assemble to witness the singular spectacle. It usually occurs in a bright day, when the sun is high. With a mighty crash, the ice at once separates from the banks to which it had adhered; the water bubbles up through thousands and thousands of the little apertures that I have described; and the ponderous mass, thus broken from its hold and overwhelmed, sinks, with a sound resembling no other that I ever heard, to the bed of the lake.

"It is a moment of great joy to the spectators, who have suffered many inconveniences from the lengthened frost; and the blue waters, dancing freely in the sunshine, seem to participate in their delight. You may imagine what a change passes over the face of the country; bird and beast hastening to quaff the tide, while the Indian prepares to launch his canoe, and the hunter exchanges his weary circuit for a light paddle across the lake. I have stood for an entire day enjoying the scene,—not one of the least wonderful in this land of wintry wonders."

Had circumstances allowed it, I should have been found among the watchers for this enfranchisement of the waters; but I was disappointed. The description, however, made an impression on my mind that I could not afford to lose. Obstructions have often been thrown across my path, as insurmountable by any power of mine as the deep, thick, solid body of ice was unremoveable by human hand; and I have looked around, and seeing no way open, have been on the point of yielding

to despondency, the offspring of unbelief, when a thought of the Canadian lake has revived my confidence, and enabled me to cast anew all my care upon Him, who has given me proofs, as unnumbered as the sands, that he careth for me. Almighty to deliver and to save, there is no restraint with him; but, without causing events to diverge from the wonted calm and orderly course of his providential government, he puts aside whatsoever menaces the security of his people; forcing them to acknowledge that glorious proclamation of his name and attribute, "I am the Lord: I change not."

And if in the temporary difficulties of this life, how much more strikingly does the type apply to that which is of eternal moment! Tied and bound in the chain of its sins, the soul lies pressed under that ponderous burden; no way of deliverance open, no hope of casting off the frozen fetter. The sun may shine on all besides, and all other things may fill their sphere of usefulness; but the spirit, conscious of its own hopeless imprisonment, can neither itself rejoice in the light of heaven, nor minister refreshment to those around. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" is a query that could never be answered, had not the Lord provided a way inconceivably wonderful, perfect, and sure. He speaks the word, and the fetter falls: the dark and heavy burden of sins is "cast into the depths of the sea," no more to be seen or remembered but in connexion with the stupendous deliverance wrought. The freed spirit swells and sparkles in the gladness of unclouded day; and hastens to glorify the God of its salvation, by communicating to others, as a good steward, the manifold gifts received from him,—this its present and never-failing theme of gratitude and confidence: "Is there any thing too hard for the Lord?"

THE CARDINAL.

THERE lately came into my possession a very fine bronze medal, of exquisite workmanship, bearing on its obverse the bust, *en profile*, of a man of noble lineaments, robed, with the tonsure, and, suspended from his neck, a crucifix. The

legend runs thus: HEN . IX . MAG . BRIT . FR . ET . HIB . REX . FID . DEF . CARD . EP . TUSC. The reverse is singularly beautiful. A female figure appears supporting a lofty cross: in her right hand is a book, at her feet a lion couchant; while carelessly scattered around lie a royal crown, a cardinal's hat, and the insignia of various orders. In the distance is seen the city of Rome, with St. Peter's rising majestically above the mass of buildings. On this side the legend is: NON . DESIDERIIS . HOMINUM . SED . VOLUNTATE . DEI. At the base is recorded the impressively instructive date, AN. MDCCLXXXVIII. It is needless to add, that this medal commemorates him who was called the Cardinal Duke of York, and who here assumes the regal title of England,—the great-grandson of James II.

In contemplating this medal, it is difficult to arrest one among the multitude of thoughts that rush in a rapid current through my mind; but the date is, however, the most striking particular, inasmuch as it marks the revolution of a perfect century from the period of the last open attempt to overthrow the Protestant religion in England; and declares, more emphatically than words could do, the righteous retribution of the Most High. It is impossible to avoid an immediate recurrence to 1688, the year of England's extremest peril, and most providential deliverance—the year when James, baffled in his desperate enterprise of prostrating our country once more beneath the footstool of the papal antichrist, abdicated the throne. The consequence of his attempt was, to use the powerful language of Dr. Croly, that the princely race of Stuart were cast out, "they and their dynasty, for ever: that proud line of kings was destined to wither down into a monk, and that monk living on the alms of England, a stipendiary, and an exile."

That monk is before me; and I cannot, without deep sorrow of heart, contemplate the effigies of the unhappy prince. His great-grandsire, in the pride of power, intoxicated by the contents of the golden cup with which the mother of harlots is represented as making drunk the kings of the earth, raised a sacrilegious hand against those faithful bishops of our church whom the Lord raised up to defend his heritage. In 1688, the seven

Protestant bishops were prisoners in the Tower of London, for daring to be true to their first and highest duty; so beautifully expressed by their spokesman, the venerable Archbishop Sancroft: "We are bound to fear God and honour the king; we desire to do both; we *will* honour you; we *must* fear God." In 1788 is chronicled by this singular medal, the infatuation by which the last of his direct line became a tonsured ecclesiastic, voluntarily incurring the prohibition to perpetuate, in legal descent, that royal and renowned family.

God hath laid in Zion a chief cornerstone, a sure foundation, expressly declaring that whosoever should fall on that stone must be broken. The Stuarts fell on it; and they are broken, and dispersed, and blotted out from the regal tables of Europe. Through unbelief, they attempted to supersede that divine foundation—disclaiming Christ as the rock, and putting in his stead a sinful mortal, and assuming to build, not on Peter's Lord, but on Peter himself, or rather on the phantom of a darkened understanding, invested with Peter's name. Not content with personally apostatising from the faith, James II. sought to involve a mighty empire in his sin, drawing the sword of persecution on such as resisted the endeavour; and here I see the poor memorial of his descendant given over to the strong delusion which he and his fathers loved, and finally immolating, in his own person, the race of Stuart on the altar of their false faith.

In no instance since the blessed and glorious Reformation has a leaning towards popery, on the part of England's rulers, escaped some open mark of the Lord's righteous displeasure. Does not this object speak to us, as a Protestant nation, in the language formerly addressed to the Jews: "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." An humble and obscure individual cannot, indeed, influence the acts of public government; but have I no personal interest in the matter—no individual duty to perform? I have, and so have you. whosoever you may be perusing this page, within the con-

fines of free and happy England. We tread the soil over which once ruled and triumphed, in unlimited dominion, the "man of sin," the "antichrist," by whom the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus was shed, and beneath whose soul-destroying yoke we, even we, should at this moment be bowed in helpless and hopeless thralldom, only for the sovereign mercy of the Lord, in working for us a deliverance that we could never have achieved. Nations are composed of individuals; and in summing up the amount of national guilt, each one is separately regarded with a view both to present and future retribution. Sinning as a nation, we must as a nation suffer here; because God will not be mocked, but will openly recompense, in the sight of the world, the indignity cast on his holy name. But there is a beautiful and most striking passage in the ninth chapter of Ezekiel, which cannot be too closely or too practically studied in these times—times of fearful departure from the straight line of Protestant duty—times marked by the daily advances of popery in the church, in the senate, and in other high places of the land; while be-

low and around, it spreads on every side, and the cry of Christian alarm is met by the scoff of hoodwinked liberalism, laughing to scorn the peril which it has incapacitated itself from descreying. O that the Lord may be gracious unto his land, and pity his people! They who can do nothing more, may surely utter that prayer: but more may be done. The duty of each individual is, first to inform himself on this subject, and then to deliver the warning wheresoever his voice or pen can reach. In the domestic circle, and throughout the range of private correspondence, all may do this. When the cholera invaded our shores, none hesitated to caution his neighbour, or to recommend a preventive remedy, if he knew of such. Protestants of England! in your Bibles you will learn the nature of the poison, and find its only antidote; while the history of your country, particularly those pages of it which are written in flames and blood, will furnish an awful application of the subject to yourselves and to your children. The storm is rising—the vessel is beginning to reel under it. "What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God!"

THE FLOWER GARDEN,

OR,

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST.

INTRODUCTION.

A LARGE garden is undoubtedly a source of large enjoyment; but a small garden has this advantage, that it brings under your notice the personal and domestic concerns of every inmate of its narrow boundaries. In the former case, you must admit the aid of a gardener, who, whatever predilection he may have for his calling, will never enter fully into your views and wishes. His professional wisdom will clash with your secret partialities: he will see a necessity for closely pruning some shrubs in the wild luxuriance of which you take especial delight: he will straighten, to your great discomfiture, shoots that naturally incline to the curving line of grace; and leave indelible traces of art where you would rather dispense with such appearances. A large garden is at best but a very limited monarchy, where all the power is vested in the administration; your Premier will indeed allow you to walk round it, and see how he manages matters; but beyond that, your privileges are wofully curtailed.

Now, in my own little territory I am a perfect autocrat: shrubs may run as wild, twigs grow as awry, and flowers spread as unrestrainedly as I please. Not a leaf can unfold but I take personal cognizance of it; not a blossom expands that I cannot rejoice over as the fruit of my special culture. No intermediate link separates me from my loving subjects: the royal prerogative of doing no wrong is mine, upon the agreeable principle that, having nobody else to please or to dissatisfy by my proceedings, my rule of right

is simply to do whatever I like best. I therefore recommend to all lovers of floriculture who are troubled with more ground than they can manage alone, that they forthwith enclose a very limited space, with a strict prohibition against intrusive hoe, rake, or pruning knife. They will find it a most interesting experiment, if they do really love flowers as flowers deserve to be loved; and not like caps and ribbons, merely for the effect of form and colouring, irrespective of any peculiar interest in the article itself.

Probably this is not so often the case as florists may presume it to be. Few, perhaps, have accustomed themselves to particular trains of thought as they looked on the various individuals which, in their parterre, represent so many families: fewer have traced so close a connection between the flower and its appropriate meditation as to find in the former a note book of ideas and events which but for such a memorandum would be forgotten, or very slightly retained. This habit may be unconsciously acquired while life itself is but a gay garden of sweets, and the secret language of inexperienced confidence is, "I shall see no sorrow:" but it needs somewhat more than a sip of the bitters mingled for God's children in this mortal state to excite a relish for the mysterious sweetness thus reserved to qualify the unpalatable draught. God has given us richly all things to enjoy: the worldling may possess, but the Christian alone can enjoy those gifts. And as through the merely mechanical arrangement of types and paper, ink and pasteboard, into certain forms, a book is produced which shall contain a correct transcript of the revealed

word, and become, under divine operation, the means of bringing life eternal within the grasp of its readers, so on many an inanimate object, formed, like ourselves, from the element of earth, a blessing is made to rest,—a name is written, which no man can know save he that receiveth it as a gift from God.

Over and over again have I noticed in these pages the strange power of sympathy conferred on these lovely preachers; and still, as the season of their glowing abundance returns, I am constrained to acknowledge it anew. It is indeed one of those impressions that cannot be swept away by the current of time; because every succeeding year adds something to the store of recollections, and something also to the sad experience of this world's nothingness—if that can be called nothing which has so much power to sting. Man's corruption disposes him to be fickle, ungrateful, unkind; this inflicts a wound, on some hearts, an almost intolerable wound; and when it comes from a quarter where the reverse was confidently expected, a chilling sense of the universal depravity seems to cast a blight over the whole face of the earth, and, blindly unconscious of our own participation in the general spot, we seem to stand alone, cast out and disowned by a race with whom we hardly care to claim the affinity which, nevertheless, exists in all its natural force. Under such a feeling there are some who know what it is to turn a retrospective eye, and to call up images of the departed, with the fond regretful thought, "*They* loved truly, loved always—they would not have changed with the changeful world; or if they were liable so to do, how sweet to know that they were taken away before that hour arrived—that nothing damped their warm affection, or clouded the brightness of their confiding looks with mistrust and displeasure." At such a moment the slightest relic of a departed friend is doubly precious: a line of his writing, a sketch by his pencil, a trifle that once was his—all are invaluable: but to me the smiling aspect of a living flower, connected by one of the links so often inscribed with the memory of that departed friend, comes home to the bosom with greater power, inasmuch as it both partakes of the vitality which in the other

things is wholly wanting, and also inevitably leads me to the contemplation of that which is not earthly.

There is something awful in the beauty and symmetry of a flower; even when without the superaddition of that fragrance which extends the influence of the lovely production to the atmosphere around it. That such a thing should have been made to spring out of the colourless and scentless dust is strange; that it should be made but to wither is stranger yet: that the only abiding part, in many of the most exquisite flowers—the seed-vessel—should present an unsightly contrast to the glowing blossom which ushered it in, and become, in general, more displeasing to the sense, in proportion to its increasing value—all is a mystery: but, oh! how instructive that mystery is, when read by the revealing light of God's word! Dear, precious little comforters the flowers of the field and garden are: they first meet me on my own ground, indulging the selfish mood, saying, Those of whom we now tell you smiled on you to the last of their mortal existence, as we shall do: they fell, but never till they fell were their loving looks averted. This is the language that soothes a natural feeling, partaking no doubt, and largely, of natural discontent and rebellion: but the Lord has altered his beautiful world to suit the altered condition of his sinful creatures; and the flowers that in Eden might have bloomed unchangeably under the easy culture of a faithful vicegerent, an ever-present type of his own holy, safe, and rejoicing state, now wither and die, to bring spiritual comfort home to the dying rebel. Yes, I think they die to soothe us: for I could not so love, or so intimately connect the memento with what it commemorates, if it was itself exempt from change. It seems fitting that its tints should wax pale, and its petals shrink and fall, leaving me half-reconciled to a lot so universal, and giving me the promise of again watching every budding indication of their annual return. Here it is that the natural feelings begin to rise into something more elevating. I look on the still blooming flower, and acknowledging its imaginary language, another shade of regret steals over me as I ponder on the shortness of its stay to soothe an aching heart. But I

know it will return. Why? Because God has said that while the earth endures, summer and winter, seed-time, and harvest, shall not cease. I have the experience of my own life added to the record of some thousands of years, that one word of his good promise has never yet failed; and I know assuredly that it never can fail, but must stand fast for ever and ever, when all seasons, with the earth itself, shall have passed away. And then some one of those rich promises will come to my mind, dissipating in its glorious light every lingering shadow, whether of discontent or of unbelief. Am I afflicted? It must needs be so, for he has spoken it. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." It is no matter whence it springs: an unkind word, or injurious suspicion, is as heavy a trial to some minds as a very serious calamity is to others: and herein, by the way, do good people so grievously err in rebuking another for smarting under what would be utterly unfelt by themselves. The Lord knows in what particular direction the patient requires to be probed; and it is singularly presumptuous on the part of an ignorant, blind stander-by, to pronounce that he means nothing by the operation, just because the creature's wisdom would suggest a different mode of applying the instrument from that which the Creator judges best. There are some who can bear me witness, because they have experienced both, that a bodily affliction of some magnitude is light, is nothing, in comparison with unkindness, or even cold indifference, where the heart might naturally turn for the reverse. To such, sickness and pain are half welcome for the sake of the tender soothing things that they call forth from beloved friends; while health and prosperity are embittered by the lack of those sympathies on which the spirit loves to repose itself. God gives or takes away accordingly. Let him do what seemeth him good.

I have not been able to select a particular flower for this paper. The burst of beauty in my little garden bewilders me; and having peopled it with mementos already recorded, I am at a loss to add another to the wreath. One, indeed, there is, a stranger altogether, both there and in the soil of England; but so humble, yet so dear! It died down to the ground, and

totally disappeared in the winter: that hard season levelled many a stately tree and luxuriant shrub, and I dared not to hope that it had spared my poor wild flower. I guarded the spot, however, from the spade, and watched with as little of hope as could possibly be mingled with such anxious longing. It re-appeared—and when the long feathery leaves stretched out on every side, not rising from the ground, but overspreading it, and the small germ of a future flower was discernible in the centre, I know not for what upon this earth I would have exchanged it. It bears a little yellow cup, much like a buttercup, though larger, and is as common a weed as can be pointed out in the meadows of its native isle, near the water's edge: and on such an edge I found it. I stood for the first, and I suppose the last time, on the margin of the most lovely lake that spreads its bright bosom to the sunbeam: several miles in circumference, yet lying before the eye like a mirror, with its boundaries distinctly marked out, and the swelling banks so gently diversified, here with a plantation, there a meadow of emerald green, and several little islands speckling the bright surface with their beautiful verdure crowned with tufts of trees—I have it before me now, and shall have it before me while I live.

On the spot where I stood, a light and buoyant step had rested, one sunny day in June, previous to entering a small boat. Ten minutes afterwards, that spot was pressed again beneath the heavy tread of those who landed a drowned corpse and bore it away. Years had passed—I visited the place, and looked around, and amid the bewildered feeling of the moment my brain seemed to receive an uneffaceable transcript of the whole scene, and there it remains. I looked down and beheld this simple wild flower laving its long leaves in the ripple that evermore rolled a refreshing moisture to the root: I scooped it up from the bed of transparent pebbles where it grew, a solitary green thing, with its cup of living gold turned sunward. I rooted it in native earth, and it grew under my eye, by day and night ever near me, travelling many hundred miles on my knee, until it reached the selected spot in my small garden, where a young hawthorn waves a faint shadow near it, and

a daily watering supplies the refreshment it was wont to derive from the hundred sweet springs of Lough Ouel.

I have said it was planted in Irish earth : true to its character, that handful of soil threw up a little weak seedling shamrock, which, strange to say, never once quailed nor changed its vivid green during the past destructive winter. They grow together, and my hand shall never part them : for God has united the spirits in heaven, and why should I divorce the poor memorials below ? Their near neighbour is the heart-ease ; and many a sweet recollection, many a far sweeter hope is clustered in a space too homely to attract the glance of taste, and so narrow as to render it a marvel that such a volume of consolation should be written there. Yet written it is, and daily read, and frequently resorted to, for that same mild lesson alluded to in the foregoing pages. The white stone-crop from Vinegar-Hill fell beneath the frost ; a plant from the walls of Derry died likewise, though both were cherished in a sheltered room : but the wild weed of Lough Ouel, and the shamrock of the meadow outlived it in the open air. It is better to receive whatever changes the Lord may appoint, whether atmospheric or otherwise, in the situation where he has originally placed us. How many a constitution is ruined by over-nursing, I have often remarked ; how many a mind is unnerved, and unfitted for the endurance of inevitable evils, by being too carefully guarded from all that might shock its sensibilities, I also know too well. An early blighting of luxuriant leaves may preserve the root for future and vigorous vegetation, when the artificial covert of a roof would retain the evanescent bloom at the imminent risk of immediate destruction from any accidental admission of external air. This is also instructive, as are most of the peculiarities attending the delightful employment of horticulture : and I think such teaching finds a readier admission to the mind, when we voluntarily draw it, as the bee does his honey, from the nectary of a sweet flower.

But still the charm that most endears the flower is that resemblance to what was kind, and loving, and confiding. Guileless itself, the mind does not suspect others of sordid or unworthy motives : and such a

mind is well depicted in the aspect of a flower. Perhaps, in the whole range of intellectual suffering, not resulting from conscious guilt, there is nothing more trying than to know one's-self the object of unjust suspicion : to perceive that what is done in perfect integrity of heart and uprightness of intention, with a single eye to some evident duty, or service of love, is viewed through a false, distorted medium : or misrepresented by the craft of Satan, to alienate the affections that would otherwise flow naturally towards an individual disinterestedly employed in the service of others. There is a remedy in this case : there is an appeal that is never unanswered in the end. One alone has the power of searching the human heart : we cannot try and know our heart, but He can and does ; and although a fearful mass of undetected sin cleaves to all that we do, or say, or think, still there is a relative uprightness of purpose, which may challenge a just judgment, as between man and man, at the hand of the Omniscient. It is when vexed by a collision with the injurious and unkind, who too often lead us to complain of being wounded in the house of our friends, that the dead pass before our mental view with all the confiding candour which belongs to a noble, loving disposition ; and we feel the bereavement in a new, an almost insupportable sense of its irreparable character. The sting of a nettle will endear the harmlessness of a violet, though the latter needs no such enhancement.

Oh what a day will that be, when every noxious thing is uprooted, and cast forth from the fair garden of this renovated earth ! The figure is of constant recurrence in scripture. " Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree ; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree." " The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad because of them ; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Before that day of the church's triumph and blessedness, I shall be gathered among the clods of the valley ; and the bright offspring of the soil, which now soothe and cheer my heart, will be blossoming over my head, and telling forth to others the same precious truths that they declare to me. It is not to be supposed that such a book has been spread before

man for six thousand years in characters illegible to those who glanced upon it. Isaac's meditations in the field at eventide may have partaken of the same nature, as the gorgeous blossoms of the East unfolded their glowing tints around him. David, from considering the starry heavens, may have turned his regards to the flowers of earth, and read their declaration of the glory of God in terms no less emphatic than the voiceless testimony of the skies. The skill that hung those elegant pendants on their slender stalks, and arranged a drapery of foliage around them, had a meaning in the act. I will not reject the comfort nor disregard the instruction that they seem designed to yield me. What my gracious Lord and Saviour has invited me to consider, I will not overlook; what he tells me that Solomon in all his glory could not equal, I will not refuse to admire; and what he represents as being clothed by the hand of God, as a symbol of his providential care over me, I will not fail to recognize as among the sweetest tokens of his love. While I live, flowers shall multiply in my garden, and be cherished in my bosom; and when I die, if any kind hand will place them there, flowers shall smile upon my grave.

CHAPTER I.

THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

SPRING is yet young; and the severity of a biting winter has retarded the appearance of much that would, in milder seasons, have shown itself. It was unreasonable to stroll with inquiring looks into the shady corner of my little garden allotted to that lovely summer flower, the Lily of the Valley, and examine the unstirred earth for tokens of what I had as yet no right to expect. The flower was before my mental eye, in all the delicate grace for which it is so conspicuous; and the train of thought whence originated my premature search will not allow itself to be banished. I must, then, forestal the Lily, and permit imagination to furnish the type while in sorrowful reality the antitype engrosses my feelings.

It is now some years since the association was formed between the flower and the individual: far more probable it was, in the course of nature, and under existing circumstances, that both should have bent over my humble grave, than that the secret link which my fancy formed between them should ever be recorded in these faint outlines of the departed. But thus the Lord has willed; and we poor children of mortality can only lay our mouths to kindred dust, and say, "Even so, Father." Flowers often appear to me to have been made for the express purpose of affording admonition to the fair and blooming: at least in their wrecked condition. I know not if the flowers in the garden that Adam was set to dress and to keep were perishable before his act of sin brought death into the world: I only know that now "the grass withereth, the flower fadeth;" and in sad unison with them "the fashion of this world passeth away." And "as for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth." We naturally bear witness to the beauty and applicability of the symbol, even before it has been brought home to our hearts by an unwilling appropriation—before the bright blossom that decked our own bower has been prostrated at our feet by the rending blast, the devouring worm, or the mysterious process of unexplained decay; but when that has occurred—when the flower to which the loved one was likened becomes the sad remembrancer of what has left our sight for ever, how thrilling is the appeal contained in those numerous passages of holy writ that afford us a higher than human authority for the symbol that naturally commends itself to the mind!

When I first beheld Zelia, she was as yet a bride; and certainly the loveliness of her aspect could not be surpassed. I had heard of her as being singularly handsome; but the portraiture my fancy drew came far short of the original. Her tall, elegant form, the exquisite symmetry of her features, and that delicate transparency of complexion that distinguishes the maidens of her native country—the land of soft zephyrs and gentle dews—struck me at once as entitling her to a place among the fairest flowers of the garden; and a subsequent acquaintance

bringing under my observation the quiet humility, retiring modesty, and child-like simplicity of her character, assigned her a locality the fitness of which none who knew her could dispute. In loveliness, delicacy, grace, and sweetness, Zelia claimed to be the Lily of the Valley among my treasures. She would have smiled, with a farther resemblance to the innocent and happy-looking flower, had she heard me say so: but she knew it not. I have seen her fair face bent over these chapters, with emotion heightening its bloom, little thinking that they were to become the record of her own short transit across my path.

Never did the most enthusiastic florist watch the pride and glory of his parterre as I have seen the appointed cherisher of Zelia fulfil his happy charge. Ardent and affectionate even beyond the common characteristic of his race, he superintended the transplantation of his delicate blossom to this rougher atmosphere from the more genial west; and even when the lip restrained its language, which was not always the case, I have marked the proud glance, scanning a whole cluster of fair girls, as in defiance of any competitor who should dispute the palm of beauty with her. I have marked it, and trembled; for I knew the frailty of the tenure whereby he held his treasure; and in the very tenacity of his grasp I read an augury of bereavement. Yet the contrast gave a finish to the picture; his passionate admiration threw a light, as it were, on the beauty of her calm unconsciousness of that which called it forth. I never traced in her look or gesture a movement of vanity: nor observed a ruffle on her quiet aspect, save when disturbed by the solicitude for his peace, whose extreme sensitiveness laid him open to many a wound that would have been an unfelt collision to one of colder temperament. "Awake to the flowers," he was peculiarly liable to be "touched by the thorns;" little would he have heeded them had he foreseen the poignard that was being sharpened for the bosom of his earthly peace and joy!

The tenderness of her concern for him rendered her delicate constitution more susceptible of injury: some severe trials of health quite undermined it; but we thought this Lily of the Valley would prove as en-

during as her hardy, though delicate-looking type, which fades, indeed, and bows its head beneath the sod under a rough visitation, yet starts up again with the reviving year, and re-asserts its pre-eminence of place among the ornaments of the earth. Zelia, restored to the full bloom of health, and in the increased radiance of beauty, was, by the will of God, removed from the comparative retirement where we had met, to a scene so far dissimilar, that, had I not known her to have been a child of God, I should have despaired of her retaining the resemblance to my simple Lily. It was so far the path of duty that no choice could be exercised: but the call which fixed the sphere of her husband's labours in the midst of metropolitan society, exposed them both to the deadliest of all snares, popularity and adulation.

Poor, blind, unbelieving creatures that we are! If a man but devote himself to a pursuit, if he rear and nurse a flower for his proper credit and renown, no less than his pleasure, we never suspect that he will carelessly leave it, in its promise of prime, to be rent by the gale or trampled by the hoof. We trust him that for his own sake he will guard the work of his hands. But even this poor measure of confidence we are slow to place in Him who plants trees of righteousness that he in them may be glorified. Knowing that the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, we cannot doubt the meaning of his dispensations. If we pass by and miss the flower, and behold no vestige thereof in its wonted place, what are we to conclude, but that the careful gardener foresaw some coming storm, or the rude intrusion of some defiling tread, and housed the delicate shrub from harm? Oh, it would have been sad to see the petals of the beautiful lily withering under a burning sun, or disfigured by the reptile's trailing course, or bruised and prostrate in the unclean soil, from which it had been lifted to bloom in the pure atmosphere of heaven. It was better to contemplate the vacant spot, and to mourn over a temporary separation, with the sweet assurance that such occurred only because the Author of its being would preserve it unharmed and undefiled, to flourish in his presence, far removed from every foe.

It was by no lingering ailment that the removal of our sweet Lily of the Valley was affected. She had bided her time, and rejoiced that a man was born into the world, and smiled back, in returning convalescence, the fond father's redoubled delight as he looked on the soft blossom that reposed on her pillow. But the pestilence walking in darkness found unsuspected admission to the scene—she was no subject for its sharp visitation—a few, a very few short days, and no more remained of that young wife and mother than what claimed the last sad office of agonized love—to be shrouded in darkness, and laid low, till the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout; with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God: till the life-restoring mandate is issued, "Gather my saints together unto me," and the dead in Christ, rising first, shall encircle the throne of Him who comes not again to suffer, but to reign; and to fulfil the blessed promise that they who here suffered with him shall then reign with him also.

"If we suffer with him"—it is a startling "if." Suffer we must, for we are born to it, in virtue of our inbred guilt and corruption; but to suffer with Christ is a mysterious privilege alike inaccessible and unintelligible to the carnal mind. He alone who knows that Christ has suffered for him can suffer with Christ. It is not ours, as in the days of the infant or awakening church, to receive the cup of persecution: the sword does not flash above our heads, nor the faggot kindle at our feet; nor are the untamed beasts of the wood let loose upon our bodies. But since to suffer with Christ is the decreed pathway to the kingdom of his glory, we may rest assured that He who has secured the end will prepare the appointed road. To contemplate the Saviour in his humiliation and affliction, and to arm ourselves with the like mind, is all that rests with us. "Be still; and know that I am God," is alike the language of preparative warning, and of subsequent support. It is a terrible lesson for flesh to learn—yea, impossible that flesh should ever learn it: but that which is contrary to the flesh receives the stroke, and bends, with the might of a renewed will, the otherwise immoveable sinew of the neck. Oh the stupendous working that achieved the

sublime victory when "Aaron held his peace!"

But nature, thus subdued, is not crushed beneath the iron fetters of a pitiless conqueror. "Cast down, but not destroyed," she weeps, and finds the tenderest of all sympathy in him whose mercy smote because he loved. We know the flower is but removed from the breath of uncongenial air, and in that we cannot mourn; but the eye has lost its delight, the heart its treasure, the home its sweetest charm. How desolate now, and blighted appears the spot that was as the garden of Eden! How cold and comfortless the earth that her presence clad in beauty! It would seem as though the very sunbeam was only attracted by the flower; and now on the naked soil it strikes harshly and glaringly, repelling the gaze that it formerly gladdened. An unsupplied want oppresses the mind; a strange vacancy sickens the heart. Restless, wearied, terrified at the newness of his position, where shall the mourner find a solace commensurate with his need? In this—"If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." There is an immeasurable distance between submission to the cross and acceptance of it. Simon the Cyrenian, compelled to bear it, and Paul glorying in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest on him, are the representatives of two classes whom man may confound, but who are severally discerned of God. The one bends in silent acquiescence beneath the burden that a stronger hand has fixed beyond his power to shake off: the other regards his affliction as a heaven-appointed means of bringing him to a fuller participation in what Christ's sufferings have purchased for him—even that strength proportioned to his day which is doubly precious as being a fulfilled promise. A strength that he marvels at—perhaps almost murmurs to find so mighty: for the disposition of the heart is that of Jonah, when fainting he wished in himself to die, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live." It loves to brood over the loss, to conjure up a thousand torturing phantoms of past happiness, and to contrast the present gloom with the most vivid of all the day-beams that preceded it. Under this influence, many a mind has wrought itself to frenzy, and

bringing under my observation the quiet humility, retiring modesty, and child-like simplicity of her character, assigned her a locality the fitness of which none who knew her could dispute. In loveliness, delicacy, grace, and sweetness, Zelia claimed to be the Lily of the Valley among my treasures. She would have smiled, with a farther resemblance to the innocent and happy-looking flower, had she heard me say so: but she knew it not. I have seen her fair face bent over these chapters, with emotion heightening its bloom, little thinking that they were to become the record of her own short transit across my path.

Never did the most enthusiastic florist watch the pride and glory of his parterre as I have seen the appointed cherisher of Zelia fulfil his happy charge. Ardent and affectionate even beyond the common characteristic of his race, he superintended the transplantation of his delicate blossom to this rougher atmosphere from the more genial west; and even when the lip restrained its language, which was not always the case, I have marked the proud glance, scanning a whole cluster of fair girls, as in defiance of any competitor who should dispute the palm of beauty with her. I have marked it, and trembled; for I knew the frailty of the tenure whereby he held his treasure; and in the very tenacity of his grasp I read an augury of bereavement. Yet the contrast gave a finish to the picture; his passionate admiration threw a light, as it were, on the beauty of her calm unconsciousness of that which called it forth. I never traced in her look or gesture a movement of vanity: nor observed a ruffle on her quiet aspect, save when disturbed by the solicitude for his peace, whose extreme sensitiveness laid him open to many a wound that would have been an unfelt collision to one of colder temperament. "Awake to the flowers," he was peculiarly liable to be "touched by the thorns;" little would he have heeded them had he foreseen the poignard that was being sharpened for the bosom of his earthly peace and joy!

The tenderness of her concern for him rendered her delicate constitution more susceptible of injury: some severe trials of health quite undermined it; but we thought this Lily of the Valley would prove as en-

during as her hardy, though delicate-looking type, which fades, indeed, and bows its head beneath the sod under a rough visitation, yet starts up again with the reviving year, and re-asserts its pre-eminence of place among the ornaments of the earth. Zelia, restored to the full bloom of health, and in the increased radiance of beauty, was, by the will of God, removed from the comparative retirement where we had met, to a scene so far dissimilar, that, had I not known her to have been a child of God, I should have despaired of her retaining the resemblance to my simple Lily. It was so far the path of duty that no choice could be exercised: but the call which fixed the sphere of her husband's labours in the midst of metropolitan society, exposed them both to the deadliest of all snares, popularity and adulation.

Poor, blind, unbelieving creatures that we are! If a man but devote himself to a pursuit, if he rear and nurse a flower for his proper credit and renown, no less than his pleasure, we never suspect that he will carelessly leave it, in its promise of prime, to be rent by the gale or trampled by the hoof. We trust him that for his own sake he will guard the work of his hands. But even this poor measure of confidence we are slow to place in Him who plants trees of righteousness that he in them may be glorified. Knowing that the Lord doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men, we cannot doubt the meaning of his dispensations. If we pass by and miss the flower, and behold no vestige thereof in its wonted place, what are we to conclude, but that the careful gardener foresaw some coming storm, or the rude intrusion of some defiling tread, and housed the delicate shrub from harm? Oh, it would have been sad to see the petals of the beautiful lily withering under a burning sun, or disfigured by the reptile's trailing course, or bruised and prostrate in the unclean soil, from which it had been lifted to bloom in the pure atmosphere of heaven. It was better to contemplate the vacant spot, and to mourn over a temporary separation, with the sweet assurance that such occurred only because the Author of its being would preserve it unharmed and undefiled, to flourish in his presence, far removed from every foe.

It was by no lingering ailment that the removal of our sweet Lily of the Valley was affected. She had bided her time, and rejoiced that a man was born into the world, and smiled back, in returning convalescence, the fond father's redoubled delight as he looked on the soft blossom that reposed on her pillow. But the pestilence walking in darkness found unsuspected admission to the scene—she was no subject for its sharp visitation—a few, a very few short days, and no more remained of that young wife and mother than what claimed the last sad office of agonized love—to be shrouded in darkness, and laid low, till the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout; with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God: till the life-restoring mandate is issued, "Gather my saints together unto me," and the dead in Christ, rising first, shall encircle the throne of Him who comes not again to suffer, but to reign; and to fulfil the blessed promise that they who here suffered with him shall then reign with him also.

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either become a wreck—a blank in the intellectual world, or nerved the hand to the commission of a crime for which there is no repentance. No! nature does not welcome the voice that, coming with power to appease the tempest, says, "Be still, and know that I am God." Poor comfort indeed it were to receive that message, if its purport respected only the absolute sovereignty with which he wields the power of life and death! The experience of one whose pride had been crushed into the dust of earth, and his glory changed into unexampled vileness, and who had learned to tremble before Omnipotence, suggested that sublime language, "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" But such helpless submission to irresistible power belongs not to the Christian. To him the declaration, "I am God," comes fraught with the sweet assurance, "I am love." The hand that smote him was guided not by despotic authority, but by compassionate tenderness. He knows God as one who doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. It pleased the Lord to bruise his beloved Son: to put *Him* to grief in whom he delighted, and to deal with him as a sinner, who did no sin. And this was love—infinite, everlasting love, in its highest exercise. The Christian knows it to be so; and he is still, even in spite of the desperate struggles of corrupt nature, desiring to rebel; for in the Godhead of his Master he acknowledges the pledge of power to save to the uttermost; and he joyfully takes hold of the strength that prostrates and paralyzes another. It is an amazing work, so to subdue the will of man; and in the mightiness of its operation the mourner feels not only that his God can do all things with him, but that he, poor worm as he is, can also do all things through Christ who strengtheneth him.

These are solemn seasons indeed, when God presents himself to the soul which he has afflicted, and says, "Lovest thou me?" And if the soul be enabled with sincerity to answer, with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee;" the stillness of spirit

succeeding that colloquy, when the Lord being in his temple, all that is earthly keeps silence before him, is perhaps the nearest approach to heavenly peace that his redeemed people can know while yet in the body. The heart knows that it may sorrow; that no prohibition has been uttered to stifle the voice of woe. Rachel was not chid when she wept for her children; and that grief in itself is perfectly innocent, who shall deny, when we point to the Holy One, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," throughout the whole course of his visible abode among the sons of Adam. The stillness commanded is not that of apathy or of indifference, or of forced acquiescence: it is a patient waiting for the promised crown, while bending under the predicted cross.

The Lily of the Valley will shortly appear as tranquilly beautiful as ever, as gracefully mantled in its broad leaf, as rich in the fragrancy of its delightful perfume. And shall the feeling be denounced as unsubmitive that draws a sorrowing contrast between the gardener's acquisition and the mourner's bereavement? If so, I claim my portion of the censure; for I shall assuredly lament over it, and wish the flower that I love had been altogether blotted from the fair face of creation, so that the husband had not been widowed, or the babe left motherless. The form and the hue that bring her with more vivid fidelity before my recollection will almost appear intrusive; for nature secretly says, "Why should these pale blossoms be found in their promised station, while the place that knew her, knows her, alas! no more for ever?" But although thus coldly greeted, the beautiful Lily will be dearer than before, for it brings a message of hope, ripening, as I contemplate it, into joy.

Last autumn I had occasion, through some changes in the arrangement of my little garden, to take up the roots of the Lily of the Valley for an hour. It was a hackneyed subject, I confess, but while looking on the small unsightly heap, as it lay at my feet, I could not but be struck anew with the wonder-working skill that was to weave such a tissue of elegance and loveliness from materials so unpromising. For the hundredth time I pondered over the nothingness of man in

his best estate, supposing the uttermost of his power and craft to be expended on one of those ordinary objects. Deprived of the aid of three elements, earth, air, and water, could he, by any effort, cause it to reproduce the form that, if left to the unassisted operation of those elements, it would certainly exhibit? Impossible: he might by violence destroy the principle of vegetable life; but to call it into action, otherwise than by the way that divine wisdom had appointed, was beyond the reach of his contrivance. Glorious in creation, how much more glorious is the Lord our God in redemption! Man may reach the mainspring of his fellow's mortal existence, and wrench it away, and stop the complicated machinery in its course: but neither man nor Satan can approach the life of the soul, when restored by Him who first breathed into Adam's nostrils "the breath of life." Dying in Adam, made alive in Christ, he that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life. It is a prize in possession, not in prospect—it is what no power could confer but that which in giving stamps the gift with immortality.

I buried the roots again, and smoothed over them the earth, and left a little stick to mark where I might confidently look for their re-appearance in due season. And she, the fair, the gentle Zelia,—she too has been laid low beneath the surface of the ground, and the sod is growing smooth above her, and the record of lamented love distinguishes it from surrounding heaps. Many a successive crop of Lilies of the Valley may rise and bloom, fade and die, before the appointed time of her bright change shall come. But come it will; the Lord will have a desire to the work of his hands. He will call, and she will answer. Imagination cannot realize the scene, when the vile body—vile at its best estate—shall be changed like unto Christ's glorious body, and become like Him. Imagination cannot look into those glorious revelations; but faith which is the evidence of things unseen, beholds it all. Affection itself sorrows not as being without hope: and that hope, that precious hope, steals upon the lacerated heart, sweetly whispering the promise, and bidding the mourners in Zion "comfort one another with these words."

CHAPTER II.

THE AMARANTHUS.

It is not in the power of winter, however severe and sweeping in his operations among the flowers, to deprive me of all my store. Though every leaf should wither, and every root become a mass of corruption, and not a blossom remain in the conservatory, I am always provided, not only with one, but a complete bouquet of bright and showy flowers. The *Amaranthus*, in all its varieties of form and colour, with everlasting of purple or of gold, and a rich assemblage of grasses that appear quite indestructible, form this magic group. I bought it in the street, of a poor, sickly-looking, aged woman, who evidently wanted the price of her "Christmas posy" to supply the craving of hunger; but this common-place mode of acquisition by no means lessened the interest of the purchase. What has been touched by the poor, possesses a peculiar character in my eyes: and I could not but think, when taking the gay bouquet from a withered hand, how tenderly the Lord provides for their wants, whom we so little consider in the midst of our festivities.

The intense cold that followed, soon left my winter nosegay without a rival, and, excepting the border of box that encircled it, not a change has yet appeared, not a tint has faded, not a leaf fallen. These flowers are an exception to the general rule; they have been cut down, yet neither dried up nor withered; even the "flower of grass," that impressive emblem of man's glory and goodliness, waves in its pristine grace, and shines brightly when a sun-beam falls aslant upon the cluster. I must needs apply this: not indeed to an individual, but to a race, far more to be wondered at than these imperishable flowers. A race long since deprived of the life-giving fatness of the root; dead, yet continually before us in all the reality of bustling life. Need I name them?—the Lord's own ancient people, the dispersed of Judah, the "nation scattered and peeled," and trodden under foot; familiar with every storm that can rage without, and preyed upon by every corrupt principle within, separated from the

stem, deprived of spiritual nutriment, yet surviving all; and destined to survive, in pre-eminent glory, the pride of that earth which now scorns them. Oh, I cannot look upon the unfading *Amaranthus* without recalling those precious words, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." I read in it at once the promise and its fulfilment; I see what the Lord has said he would do: I see what he actually does, and I know assuredly what he will yet do. I have no more doubt of the literal restoration of Judah and Israel to the literal *Canaan*, no more doubt that in their own land "they shall possess the double," and shine the brightest in a bright and glorious church on earth, than I have of my existence. The time is not now far off when the Lord will be gracious to his land, and pity his people; when he will heal their hurt, and gather them, and watch over them to do them good, and show the world how dearly his poor Israel is "loved for the fathers' sake." The whole church sends up the petition, "Thy kingdom come," and the coming of that kingdom will be to the despised Jew a receiving again into God's favour; and that receiving again of the Jew shall be to the Gentiles, "life from the dead."

Indissolubly connected with this delightful subject is the name, the image of one who has often rejoiced with me over those sweet promises to Israel, which none can gainsay without depriving the holy scriptures of all literal meaning, and debasing them into a cluster of shadows. He was a Gentile by birth, but in spirit an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile. Awake to all that concerned the kingdom and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, he was peculiarly alive to the rich portion secured to the children of Abraham; and dearly did he prize the privilege of devoting himself to them. Often have I seen him, in his pulpit, with the little ones of the Hebrew schools ranged in the opposite gallery, catching new zeal, new energy, new confidence from a glance at that precious charge: and often have I beheld him, in the midst of the Hebrew boys, lost in thoughtful contemplation of the harvest that should follow that first-fruits offering, presented in faith and hope. I have also known him send for a considerable number of the children to his own hospitable

abode, and range them before him, and hold sweet converse with them concerning their own Messiah, the Prince. There was no flashing enthusiasm about him, but a deep, calm, settled conviction that Israel should yet be gathered, and that in having his own portion of labour assigned in that field, he was honoured above all others. He was a man of thought, of study, and of prayer, and this was the element wherein he dwelt—the exceeding great and precious promises given to the children of the fathers and the prophets. Others might rise in the church, or seek the promotion of their worldly interests: to him it sufficed that he came within the scope of that oft-repeated declaration, "Blessed is he that blesseth Thee."

Seven years have now passed since I sojourned under that roof with the good old Simeon for my fellow-guest; and very dear to me is the recollection. I had before been privileged there beyond all other places: I had caught some sparkles from the brilliant, though eccentric flashes of Wolff, and had identified myself with a little circle whose great bond of union was the heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, that they might be saved; and whose hourly study it was to devise plans for forwarding the blessed work. I had sat, many a summer's day under the tall, branching tulip trees, that threw their refreshing shadow on the smooth grass plat: and while the lovely group of youthful faces—for my friend had a goodly array of olive-branches round about his table—added life and beauty to the scene in itself most sweet, I have conversed with him and his beloved partner on the coming day, when Israel should sit each one under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, with none to make them afraid.

At the period of my first and successive visits there was one present also, whose joyous temper brought mirth into every circle. They loved him much, and greatly did he enjoy the social freedom that dwelt there. A thousand little incidents crowd on my recollection as I recall those days: but Mr. H. knew and deeply sympathized in my chief solicitude for that beloved one; and I trust they are now rejoicing together in the presence of the Lamb. Never can I forget the sweet words of comfort given me by Mr. H. when the terrible stroke of

sudden bereavement fell upon me. "Oh, my sister, our God is all-powerful; even the 'Lord save me' of drowning Peter was enough." There was a fitness in the application, ignorant as we then were of the state of that beloved object's mind, which met the case exactly, and proved a word in due season to a fainting heart. My last visit was made in a wintry season, and under circumstances of peculiar desolation. He, who brightened us all by his sunshiny presence, had long been laid beneath the sod; it was not yet green over the dumb boy's grave; and other circumstances combined to depress me unusually. My friend also was declining in health, and sorely exercised in mind by the perplexities recently introduced into the church by his most beloved associate—the brilliant, but sadly deluded and deluding Irving. He was absorbed in many anxious thoughts, and the presence of Mr. Simeon proved most cheering to us all. The glorious subject of Israel's redemption occupied each heart, and dwelt on every tongue: and truly I can say, that, like the Amaranthus, my valued friend shone in bright contrast to the winter around him, while dwelling on that "everlasting love" which is pledged to accomplish the deliverance of God's people.

The hours were dearly prized by me, little as I anticipated a speedy separation of the parent from his children, the husband from his partner, and the pastor from his flock. I saw him but once again, and that was upon the platform of a densely-crowded meeting, when, unexpectedly, he rose for a few moments, to avow himself the author of a testimony against the withering and blasting influence of Socinianism, in a society to which he was warmly attached. He rose, indeed, like an apparition; and if I was pained at the emaciated figure and pallid aspect—so changed from what he had even a few weeks before appeared—still more did I rejoice and glory in the steadfast though meek determination with which the disciple voluntarily stood forth to acknowledge how zealously he was affected in a good thing—how jealous of the least possible taint on the doctrine of the great God, his Saviour. He made his avowal, looked calmly around upon a thousand frowning brows, and resumed his seat, beyond my

ken. It was a striking incident, rendered indelible by the subsequent removal of that faithful servant from the vineyard below to the resting-place above. Once more I visited, for a few hours, the mansion of hospitality and love: the tulip-trees were in full beauty, the lawn was soft and verdant as ever, the vine mantled richly over the windows, and flowers in gay profusion breathed their sweet perfume through the closed shutters. I could not look out upon what was so fair: a glance toward the one object that lay concealed beneath a black pall, never more to be unveiled to mortal eye, filled my heart, to the exclusion of earth's brightest beauties. I thought on the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah:—I thought, how often had those lips breathed the language, "Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel?"—how frequently those lifeless hands had dispensed the water of baptism, and the consecrated elements of the Lord's supper, to such as obeyed the call: and how high that heart had beat in holy exultation over the lost sheep so gathered back into the fold. One short sentence of inspiration expressed what no tongue of man or angel could otherwise have uttered, "Blessed is he that blesseth Thee."

Sitting down to supper with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, is our Lord's own description of the privileges reserved for such as be Abraham's children by faith; and, blessed be His holy name!—there is no difference of Jew or Gentile in that consummation of eternal felicity. But I cannot imagine with what eye or with what understanding those persons read the bible, who see there no especial reference to the continued elder-brotherhood of the literal Israelite, even to the end of the world: or who consider that in the wide promulgation of the gospel, for which we are taught to look and to pray, the converted Jew will not be made a chosen and peculiarly honoured instrument in the Lord's hands. Not that I expect the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ, by a quiet extension of the truth. No, I believe that the wine press of wrath must first be trodden, and the enemies of the Son be broken to pieces—dashed asunder like the shreds of a potter's vessel.

I believe that Great Babylon, papal Rome, must come in remembrance before him, and receive the cup of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God, in recompense for the wine of the wrath of her fornications, wherewith she has seduced the kings of the earth and blasphemed the Most High. I believe that the whole company of Antichrist, papal and infidel, must be violently overthrown, and the day of vengeance usher in the year of the redeemed of the Lord. It is in combination with all this, that I look for the full ingathering of God's ancient people, their re-establishment in the land which he gave unto their fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever, the restoration of that land to more than its pristine fertility, and the abundant going forth of the law of the Lord from Jerusalem; by means of his own reconciled Israel—once more, and in a higher sense than ever, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, a blessing to the uttermost ends of the earth.

When it first pleased God, by his Spirit, to open my understanding to those things which are foolishness to the natural man, and before I enjoyed the privilege of communion, by word or letter, with any of his people, I was so powerfully struck by the distinctness of the promises given to the literal seed of Abraham, that I often devised plans for sending forth fishers to fish, and hunters to hunt for them; often prayed over the ninth chapter of Daniel; and longed to proclaim to others, which I supposed a new discovery—that Israel should again blossom, and bud, and fill the world with fruit. I know not whether my surprise or my joy was the greater, on being told, after a long while, that an extensive and increasing society was in actual operation to this very end: and however slightly I may have seemed to regard the subject, under the conviction that my own line of service was marked in a different path, I think there is no prospect of spiritual blessedness, or temporal prosperity for Christ's church, presented to my mind, wherein "THE JEW FIRST" is not recognized. Yes, like my winter nosegay, so bright in death, the several shoots of that venerable stem, which have yet a name to live and are dead, speak the language of assured promise to me. The root that bore them still survives, a

perennial, destined to bloom again in the multitude of its blossoms, and to send forth many an off-set to other gardens, where the Lord shall plant them, and keep them, and water them every moment.

It is a better ingredient in the overflowing curse of Rome, that pagan or papal, she has ever persecuted the Jews. That brand is imprinted so deeply, that the fires now kindling for her will not burn it out:—"Cursed is he that curseth thee." It is the singular privilege of poor Ireland that she is totally free from this stigma, so widely extended over Europe; and it is well known how, in her deep poverty, the riches of her liberality have abounded towards the missionary work now carried on among the Hebrew people; and shall not poor Ireland one day set her seal, despised and forsaken as she now is, to the equally sure record, "Blessed is he that bleaseth Thee." God's blaspheming enemy is still permitted, to a great extent, to trample down one who never set her foot upon the neck of God's prostrate people: but all these things are had in remembrance before him, and when he maketh inquisition for blood he will not forget it. The Amaranthus is a treasury of precious thought, recollections, promises, and hopes—connected with the most glorious subject that can possibly occupy the mind of man—the coming, kingdom, and glory of the Messiah. Oh, that he would shortly accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten that hour! The world is lying dead around; the torpor of indifference is only varied by the tumult of tempestuous strife. The pleasures of earth, like the gay flowers that fell before the frost, perish in the using, and thorns stand out in naked savageness to mock the eye that seeks for the fair mantle that once concealed them. Benumbed or torn away, all has so eluded my grasp, that while casting a glance around, I am tempted to inquire, Did flowers ever bloom here; or can they again make bright this desolated ground? But the lovely Amaranthus smiles an answer, conveying to my soul that sublime word, "I am the Lord; I change not." Yea, and while humbly pleading the privilege of an ingrafted Gentile branch, partaking of the root and fatness of the parent tree, I am enabled to receive, on behalf of the literal Israel, the

full pledge, the immutable promise founded on the immutability of Him who has spoken it:—"I am the Lord; I change not: therefore YE SONS OF JACOB are not consumed."

CHAPTER III.

THE VIOLET.

How sweet is the promise of an approaching spring, when winter has firmly established his severe dominion! Light is always lovely; but never so precious as when shining in a dark place; a star, "distinct though distant," bearing witness that we are on the right track to "the haven where we would be." Such a light we are told, is the sure word of prophecy, itself an earnest of what it promises, even as the pole-star in the midnight sky is of the day-beam that shall break in the east, whither it enables us by its bearing, to direct our watchful gaze. A promise too, and an earnest, of a more genial season, are united in the lovely little flower that is breathing its rich perfume around me now. The Russian Violet, formed to retain both tint and fragrance through the most biting severity of weather, gives me this lesson of hope; bringing also in its train many a recollection no less dear than are the anticipations it numbers.

It has often been a question with me whether hope or faith is the more vividly depicted in this flower: but they are inseparable, or, at least, they ought to be so. "Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, how doth he yet hope for?" and again, Faith is "the evidence of things not seen." Each has its eye fixed on what the flesh cannot behold: each is in itself an invisible good, yet diffusing by its presence such sweets as nothing else can shed. This is the property of the violet; it droops its head, and hides beneath the foliage of a bank, and makes itself known, not through the medium of our sight, but by the sense of delicious enjoyment, when we pass by its fragrance-breathing covert. To most minds there is something attractive in the mysterious; and from childhood I have taken special

pleasure in the ramble of which the professed object was to pick violets. With small baskets pendant from our hands, often have we, as a lively troop of youngsters, sallied forth along the lane, over the meadow, and down by the long narrow channel that separated the road from its tall hedge-row fence, where ran a shallow stream of tolerably pure water, supplied by a neighbouring spring. This stream rose among the pebbles, under a foot-bridge of light planks, and after spreading around, in different directions, as if uncertain which way to shape its future course, it finally settled to divide itself, and replenished the excavations on either side the afore-mentioned hedge. Perhaps it was the abundant moisture thus supplied that caused the vegetation of the bank to shoot so high and spread so luxuriantly. Certain it is that, what with the bright holly and its ruby berries throughout winter, the sweet hawthorn flower in May, the briar rose and straggling honey-suckle in the summer months, and the overhanging mass of bramble, festooned with the wild vine, to autumn's close, this was a very king of hedges. Here and there, a stout knotted oak threw out its capacious, though not lofty trunk, seeking, as it were, to hide the wounds inflicted on its head by a superabundance of foliage: while, beneath the shelter of these various guardians appeared a succession of wild flowers, so numerous, so abundant, that one wondered how they found room to grow, or left space sufficient to exhibit the peculiarly cool and refreshing green that formed the ground-work of the enchanting tapestry.

Here it was that the violet loved to hide its head: not growing on the bank beyond, but lurking under a sort of projecting shelf on our side of the channel. No dusty road was bordered by the little stream: the carriage-way was unfrequented, except by the vehicles employed in agricultural operations on the property; a well-fastened gate at the end excluding all others. Accordingly, the grass sprang up at will, save only in the track of the horses and wheels, and a broad border of dwarf furze, intermingled with fern and stately thistles, separated this road from the high verdant footpath that straggled in unequal width nearest the edge.

Here we roamed, together or apart, whether in quest of wild flowers, or merely for a stroll: but I soon discovered a more tempting track, and many a time did I steal through a gap, close beside one of the stunted oaks to enjoy the solitude that few others cared to court.

The interior side of the hedge was far less gay, but to me more attractive; the channel there was so narrow as to be hardly perceptible, while the bank was smoother, more abrupt, and bearing only such flowers as love the shade. Violets there were in unsuspected profusion, for I never told how rich a store I had discovered, neither did I gather them. Their fragrance satisfied me as I slowly wandered along, peering over the fair pasture that stretched northward, and lifting many a look to the line of distant hills, basking in the sunshine from which I was screened by that tall fence. My violet bank was like a miser's hoard, guarded from other hands, and untouched by my own. It seemed so in keeping with the innocent, shy-looking lambs that, at the same season, were trying their limbs on the grass, that I never wished to rob the landscape of its fanciful association. Oh the light, the beauty of tender spring, as it meets a youthful spirit, contemplative, but still unclouded with the cares of life! The Violets before me are violets also, as beautiful, as odorous, as any that ever sweetened my path; but the external scenery of chill, confirmed winter that surrounds me is not more dissimilar from the budding luxuriance of the sunshiny landscape, instinct with life and motion, than are the inward cogitations that accompany my present employment from the dreams of that period. The flower is the same, and the flower only; I can bend over it until, "The past returns, the present flies"—until the frost and snow of cheerless winter are replaced in my thoughts by the budding graces of advanced spring; and the turmoil, the anxieties, the disappointments, the perplexities of every day give place to the placid flow of feeling that rolled along so softly, yet so brightly, as I rambled beside the violet bank.

But retrospections of past happiness do not produce this tranquillity of spirit; though divested by distance and time of the little inequalities that even then ruffled

its course. They rather seem to afford a sort of foretaste, a faint specimen of what the human mind is capable of enjoying, when relieved alike from cares for the present and from fears for the future. Faint, indeed, is the shadow so long past of the substance that is yet to come: but self appears to vanish from the picture when I contemplate the delights reserved for, perhaps, a future race of earth's inhabitants, when the glorious day of her promised renovation dawns, and the great enemy of their peace is chained, and the kingdoms of this world openly become what in reality they never ceased to be—the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. That such a period of blessedness is in store for the church, no reader of scripture thinks of denying: that the period draws rapidly near, no observer of passing signs can doubt. I am not going to enter upon the difficult ground of millenarian doctrine: my own views are fixed and settled, so far as I can trace the sure word of prophecy: and that is, perhaps, a little farther than I am in the habit of proclaiming. It is a subject better suited for private meditation than for the noisy, and sometimes unfriendly discussions that result from forcing it into notice. Nothing can be more sweet, more profitable, than to exchange thoughts upon it with one who sympathizes in our views and hopes: few things more ungracious than to parade it before the unwilling eyes of a brother or sister who beholds it through a different medium: but this I will say, that the violet—and above all the Russian violet—is identified in my mind with a hope that will not make ashamed, because it is founded on what the Lord hath spoken concerning the world and the church in the latter-day glory.

By the world I do not mean that which hateth Christ and his people, but the material world, which he formed at the first so very good, to be the habitation of an obedient, happy race of beings—the original regalia, whereof some scattered and broken gems lie around us, go where we will, bespeaking what must have been the grandeur of the combination that once existed; what will be the magnificence of its future display. The earth, perhaps, will even then require the hand of labour and of skill to direct its abundant produc-

tions: it may be once more a garden of Eden, and man will be set in it to dress and to keep it, as of old: for a state of inactivity is incompatible with a state of perfect enjoyment. But the foot will not then be torn by thorns and briars, nor the spirit wounded by unkindness: the hand will not know the sting of venomous plant or reptile, neither will the conscience be stung by virulent passions, or unavailing remorse. The strong will not oppress the weak, nor the mighty prey on the helpless. Imperfection and infirmity must needs cleave to humanity, in that which is not destined to be its final state of being; but when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest, when none shall hurt nor destroy in all his holy mountain, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of his glory, and the accuser of the brethren cast down, the roaring and devouring lion chained, and the corrupt principle in man, restrained by victorious grace, find no tempting fiend to urge it into rebellious action,—oh it will be a joyous thing to look abroad upon a renovated creation, and to hold sweet communion with the Most High, in the midst of His shining handy-work!

I cannot attach individual biography to this sweet flower, the Violet; for I have confined the record of these associations to the departed, and of those only D—— and the dumb boy took delight in the subject; though, blessed be God! I have many dear living friends with whom to hold sweet converse upon it. Nay, the violet has an antitype too; but long, very long may it be ere that beloved individual's name shall appear in any record of the departed! Still, amid "a multitude of thoughts"—they might safely be varied like the psalm, and translated "sorrows" too—that I have in my mind, it may be forgiven if I welcome the refreshment breathed on my soul by this gentle little visiter, the soft, sweet Violet, with its serious, yet cheerful countenance, its tranquillizing influence, and its promise of happier days. The individual referred to, will probably read these pages: but will be the last to suspect the identity: and that which has never been spoken cannot be betrayed. Therefore, of all my Violet-natured friends, none need be apprehensive of any farther publication than my

dear little store on the north side of the hedge experienced.

I have named D—— as taking delight in this subject: in reality, he was most stiffly opposed to what are called the modern millennarian views, including a personal reign of Christ for a thousand years on this visible earth. I well remember his answer to a friend, who, in trying to combat his objections said, "Suppose a person were to exclaim to you, Yonder is the Lord, sitting in that cloud, coming in glory towards us, would you not look up?" D—— briskly replied, "No, I would not: for it is written, 'If they say unto you, lo here is Christ, or lo there, believe them not.'" The subject was, of course, a personal pre-millennial advent; and when in more familiar discourse, we have talked over the matter, he has often said to me, "Never mind, dear friend, let him *now* fix his throne in our hearts; and whensoever and whosoever he appears to reign, you and I shall reign with him." I did not so far differ from him, nor do I now, as to excite any debate: and very delightful were the walks that we have taken, amid wild but beautiful scenery, anticipating the destruction of all that could harm, and the re-establishment of all that could rejoice the eye and heart of man, when the promised period should arrive of the Lord's reign—be it of what nature it might.

The Russian Violet, springing from the frozen ground, amid storms and every mark of devastation, presents also a more exact type of what I conceive will be the circumstances of that period. That the world will be converted by the preaching of the gospel, I have not the slightest expectation. Judgments most terrible, such a blasting of the breath of divine displeasure as shall wither the nations, such a breaking to pieces under the rod of his wrath as the rending of the wildest tempest never inflicted on the shrivelled leaves of the frost-nipped forest, are what I look for, as the sure precursors of that glowing spring. I know that the great papal Babylon, and the blasphemy-branded beast of infidelity which she is even now bestriding, shall be destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming: I know that the princes and mighty men, and all the host of their antichristian alliance, shall vainly cry to the mountains to fall on them and

to the rocks to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. The gospel must be preached as a witness throughout the world, and then shall the end come: and oh, what a blessedness will be theirs who see the, perhaps, few souls gathered out, through their instrumentality, from the doomed mass, enabled to shelter themselves not from, but *in* the hand of that awful King! When the day of vengeance is in his heart to execute it, then the year of his redeemed is come. When the great day of his wrath arrives, the weakest are they who shall be found able to stand—even such as have become little children, that they may enter the kingdom of heaven.

It is when contemplating the horrors of that fiery tempest, that the soul which has taken refuge in Jesus can find a calm amid the petty storms of the passing day. It is when dwelling on the promised unity and peace of the Redeemer's church, the predicted beauty and fertility, and holiness of this fair world, that we can smile upon the disfiguring work of these wintry elements. Whatever allowance be made for the highly figurative language of scripture, nothing can divest it of the plain literal meaning that breathes from every page of its prophetic announcements. To argue that because all believers are children of faithful Abraham, therefore the promises made to his actual race are all to be taken spiritually, and that no future restoration is in store for the dispersed of Judah and the outcasts of Israel; or that because the enlargement and blessedness of the church are often predicted under the similitude of material things, we are therefore not to look for an actual restoration of much that has been lost or defaced, through the usurpation of Satan and the abounding of permitted iniquity—is just to degrade the Bible into a book of riddles, calculated to raise false hopes and to invite expectations that are never to be realized.

This frigid and confined plan of interpretation I leave to those who take no pleasure in surveying the traces of God's footsteps among his visible works: or whose mortal lot is one of such unruffled quietude, or of such utter abstraction from present things, that they see not any ground for desiring a change in the face

of the earth, until all be finally destroyed. I love to think otherwise: I love to look at the uniform uninterrupted course of the immense machinery of the heavens; and believing this to be the only spot where the order and harmony of a perfect creation have been interrupted, to anticipate a day when our little globe shall once more move on, not only obedient to those laws which have not been, cannot be broken, but also in the loveliness with which the Lord at first invested her, and which has been so fearfully marred, trampled on by his rebellious foes. What have the innocent elements done, that we should resolve to believe that an exterminating decree has gone forth against them, in their present degraded state? We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together—that the creature was made subject to vanity not willingly:—but I am touching on debateable ground: and it will be better to ponder in silence on these themes over my sweet violet, which sends back to me all the breathings of hope, patiently waiting for that which yet it sees not.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MIGNONETTE.

THERE is, I think, only one among the usual phenomena of our climate, to which I cannot reconcile myself. A clear sunny sky is exhilarating, a cloudy one generally picturesque. Light rain is refreshing: a good pelting shower is emphatic. A gusty day is pregnant with amusing incidents, a steady gale rouses all one's energies to withstand it, and a regular tempest is the *ne plus ultra* of magnificence. But a fog! a misty, drizzling, distilling from a low colourless, shapeless, monotonous sky—this is a sore trial of patience. Nor am I singular in acknowledging the ungenial influence of such a season; for my dog drops his ears and looks pensive; my cat exhibits an aspect decidedly melancholy; my playful squirrel huddles himself up in a corner of his box, disregarding the call to come forth; and even my noble falcon, bold as the mountains of her native Done-

gal, and sprightly as the peasant maidens who pull the flax at their feet—even my beautiful Jess, sits with ruffled plumage and depressed head, a miniature personification of the king of birds, as described by Gray, when slumber has quenched

The terror of his beak, the lightning of his eye.

Who would not pity a poor scribbler under such circumstances, reminded by a hint from the region of types—I mean a typographical not a typical hint—that it was full time to supply the cravings of the press with another Chapter. With loitering step and woful countenance, and head as misty as the weather, I entered my study this morning, trying to conjure up the phantoms of some appropriate reminiscences, when behold! just placed on my table by the hand of affectionate indulgence,—unconscious how timely was the boon—appeared two flower-pots, the one containing a most beautiful heath, the other a plant of fragrant mignonette. Both of these are full to overflowing with recollections precious to my heart. The language of flowers, addressed to me as I walk along, is ever, “Don’t you remember?” and oh, in what touching unison the heath and mignonette appeal to my spirit now! The seed of the latter was the first that my fond father gave me to sow in the little garden portioned out, in his own most noble and spacious one, and divided between me and my lovely brother, with the scrupulous impartiality that tends above all other things to keep unbroken the bond of fraternal love: the former, the flowering heath, was the last gift bestowed by that beloved hand, on his delighted girl, before a sudden instantaneous blow, laid it powerless in death. I know not how, but hereafter I shall know, why two out of the three precious ties which bound my heart from infancy were snapped with such fearful abruptness:—why my midnight sleep was broken by a frantic summons to come and see my father die; and why, after many a long year, my waking eye must fall upon a letter exciting no alarm, but holding out the hope of pleasant news from the distant object of my fondest affection—and telling me that he was drowned.

“Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” There is not in man, nor in any created intelligence, that which will

enable the lacerated heart secretly and sincerely to breathe those words. I say secretly, because, without any conscious insincerity, the lip will often utter such language, when the spirit is internally writhing with resisted, but not subdued rebellion. I know not whether perfect and unvarying resignation to the stripes of our Father’s rod is the experience of any of his children. It is not mine: rebellion is written on me, in legible characters; but sometimes, when the tide of awakened emotion sets in with a rush of recollections the most overwhelming, a voice mightier than the noise of many waters, says, “Peace, be still!” and immediately there is a great calm: so great, so sweet, so wonderful, that it can be no other than the work of Him, who, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, has the sympathy of man to comprehend the sorrow, and the omnipotence of God to subdue it.

Now looking again upon the flowers before me, I am struck with the vast privilege of mind: its prerogatives so far above the nearest approach that animal instinct in its highest development can attain to. My dumb companions are all remarkably sagacious, and have been brought to such an amicable understanding, that the little dog frequently shares his basket with the cat,—and the latter has many a game of play with the squirrel, through his bars,—and I have seen the falcon between the dog’s paws, without either exhibiting any alarm or anger, although the whole party combine in testifying the hottest displeasure if a strange animal enters their presence. So companionable they are, that sometimes I can hardly trace the separating line between their fine instinct and the reasonable principle in man; but here it stands out in striking inferiority. There is in them no perception of what is so thrillingly felt by me; they all look at the beauteous plants, because their vigilance is alive to the introduction of any new object among them; the squirrel is fearful, the cat suspicious, the falcon curious, and the dog jealous: but the whole world of flowers may bloom in all their splendid tints, and breathe their united sweets, without affording aught that can counteract the atmospherical influence. In short, matter remains buried in the fog, while

mind soars far above it to regions of sunshine and joy.

The Mignonette, as I have remarked, takes precedence of all other flowers in my gardening associations. Well do I remember the site of my small estate, skirting a gentle grassy ascent in the orchard, down which it was our especial delight to roll our plump little persons on a warm dry day. My father whose taste for floriculture was remarkable, had requested his favourite gardener to procure a new and choice specimen of the flower: and, on opening the paper, he exclaimed, "Why, Thorne, you promised me a particular sort; but this is the common Mignonette." "No, no, sir," replied the gardener proudly pointing to the inscription on the wrapper; "this is the Mig-no-net-te." The deep dimple in my father's cheek betrayed the smile that his kind feeling strove to repress; and without farther remark, he served out to us respectively a pinch of the distinguished seed, which we carefully deposited and raked over: though I cannot suppose that it came to maturity: as an obstinate propensity for having what is called too many irons in the fire generally induced me to set one plant over another, to the destruction of all. The mignonette became, however, from that day, a prime favourite with me: and such it will remain, "while memory holds her seat;" for it brings to mind, almost to view, that noble orchard with its many trees: in the midst of them a magnificent mulberry, of great age and extraordinary dimensions, from whose topmost height I have often seen the large white owl sally forth on her nocturnal foray, and the bat wheel round and round, then plunge into the impenetrable fortress of twisted boughs and broad luxuriant leaves. On the opposite side of the garden a shrubbery wound, interspersed with many rare and beautiful plants: while our own little grassy knoll stretched down even to the low windows of the principal room in an old-fashioned brick house, covered to the eaves with a vine that seemed coeval with itself. These recollections are the sweeter, because the scene survives in memory only. I was but ten years old when we bade a final adieu to the abode; and eight years after that, having an opportunity of revisiting it, I flew, rather than ran, to the window of my

old apartment overlooking the garden, and beheld—a timber-yard!

Sometimes I regret having ever undertaken these Chapters. They lead to much egotism: and no doubt provoke many smart observations from readers whose minds, unsoftened by adversity, and perhaps naturally superior to the comparative trifles that always had power to engage mine, see little besides puerility, affectation, and prejudice, in their pages. Yet, occasionally, I meet a tearful look, accompanied with the remark, "Your chapter touched a chord in my bosom, and soothed a troubled spirit;" or something similar. Therefore, I pursue the theme, desiring to assure those who feel with me that their approval is dear to my heart; and protesting to those who do not, that they cannot think more contemptuously of me and my work than, by God's grace, I am myself enabled to do.

Next after the heartsease, I think the Mignonette is the most perseveringly delightful of flowers. As lowly in situation, less attractive in aspect, but so fragrant, so durable, so willing to take root, and grow, and gladden all around it, in any soil, or any spot, under any circumstances, it seems to typify the active, unassuming Christian, with singular propriety. How often, on entering a garden, or a room, the sense is feasted as by the odour of a thousand flowers, when not a single bright tint meets the eye, until the faint blush upon those tiny blossoms, distinguishing them from the green stem and leaf, reveals the source of such welcome fragrance. That blush especially becomes the lowly flower and the retiring Christian, who lives, and grows, and works, while others live, and grow and sparkle. There are many such: my Mignonette, like the ivy, represents a class; and I will name that class forthwith, and glory in it, while I name it—The Irish Scripture Readers.

"What! more of Ireland and the Irish?" Dear friend, yes. You do not know enough of them yet, not even if you be cradled in the very bosom of the Green Isle. Some of you are, I know; and some will read this, who may remember when, amid a cluster of warm hearts, beneath the shade of a noble grove, near a venerable ruin, where a very paradise

of bright flowers and brighter smiles is watered by the majestic Slaney, a fair twin said to me, "We do love your chapters, and cherish all the flowers you name." That day was one of deep enjoyment, and infused new energy into me: it taught me that young hearts might be roused, and young hands nerved in the cause of their country, even by such means as these. Let those who refreshed my spirits then, cherish the little, lowly *Mignonette*, and blend with its character the humble work of men who, unobserved, disregarded, yea, often trampled upon, are breathing through the wilderness the savour of life unto life.

These men are generally, indeed almost exclusively, taken from the humblest walks of society, day-labourers, weavers, and sometimes the keepers of hedge-schools. The word of life, by some appointed means, reaches the ear and heart of the poor native Irishman: he feels its quickening power, and being himself raised from the death of trespasses and sins, he looks abroad upon his countrymen, still lying under the shadow of death, and constrained by the love of Christ, burns to make known among them the unsearchable riches of his Saviour. The Irish being his vernacular tongue, he speedily learns to read it, by means of some circulating school of the blessed "Irish Society," and, armed with the Sword of the Spirit, he goes forth to assail the strong holds of Satan, in the heart of the Beast's dominions. This exposes him to a storm of persecution, well understood by such as reside in Ireland, but inconceivable by an English subject. As regards his own neighbourhood and class in society, it may truly be said that every man's hand is against him, though every man's heart is not. The power of priestly intimidation is brought to bear on all who venture to encourage him; for there is not upon earth so terrible an object to a true priest of Rome, as the Holy Bible; unless it be the man who dares to proclaim its sacred truths, in a language understood by the people. Consequently, the vassals of popery must stand arrayed to oppose him; and it is too undeniable a fact that except where the mind has been spiritually enlightened, the nominal Pro-

testant beholds with suspicious dislike one who has forsaken the religion of his fathers; and sneeringly denounces "the turncoat," though the turn that he has taken is from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God.

There is not, perhaps, among the hundreds of Irish scripture readers, at this moment, one who cannot set the seal of his individual experience to Paul's declaration—"No man stood by me." The enemy levels his fiery darts at every child of God: how much more anxiously and accurately at one who goes about to assail the strongest foundations of his most elevated throne! I know, and I avow, that to attack Popery is to incur the fiercest assaults of hell: to rouse up a host of opposers, calumniators, open foes and false brethren, from without; fears, temptations, and fiery trials within. Our solemn convictions are denounced as prejudices, our zeal as intemperance, our forethought, fanaticism. Shielded from violence, surrounded by encouraging helpers, and cheered on our path by their approving countenance, still we who, in Protestant England, dare to act a Protestant part, are liable to many an almost disabling wound in the house of our friends. What then must be the lot of the poor, despised peasant, in the very citadel of popery, taking an unsupported stand against the united forces of Satan and man, while the great contest that forced Paul to cry out, "Oh, wretched man that I am!" is carried on within, by the Spirit warring against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit.

But the Scripture Reader has taken up his cross, and follows Christ. He goes on often through persecutions, afflictions, stripes and imprisonment. He enters the obscure cabin at dusk, and addressing the poor, doubly benighted inmates, in the loved accents of their native race, he draws from his bosom the proscribed "story of peace," and tells them in the most persuasive of all words that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners—that wine and milk, without money and without price, are freely held forth to those who, up to that hour, had been spending their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not. Some whose hearts the

Lord opens receive the word with gladness: and the patient labourer, leaving it to a mightier hand to give the increase, proceeds on his thorny way, to plant in another spot. His life is thus passed, until perhaps the hand of persecuting violence waylays him, and sends him to his sure reward by the blow of a stone, or the stab of a knife, while his last breath sobs out the dying prayer of Stephen, in hope that the murdering, blaspheming Saul may become like himself the preacher of the faith that now he persecutes. Or, if rescued from the assassin's hand, this lowly Mignonette of the Lord's parterre maintains his inobtrusive station at the foot of loftier shrubs, and breathes the odours of heaven around the heel that tramples upon his unresisting form.

Taking one of the class, I will name an individual well known to me, and to many in England. His name was Dennis Sullivan: his native place was Kerry. Converted to the truth as it is in Jesus, he abjured the soul-destroying errors of Popery, and made himself eminently useful, as a Reader, to the Irish Society of London. When, in 1830, the Lord first blessed our efforts to the establishment of an Irish church in St. Giles, Sullivan gave his whole soul to the cause: and I well remember that our earliest meeting was as fellow-labourers in it. About that time the Reformation Society engaged his services, first as a reader, then as clerk in their office; and most faithfully, zealously, diligently, did he perform the duties of his station there, until the hour of closing it dismissed him to the post he so dearly loved—a teacher's place in the adult evening school, where the Irish labouring poor assemble to be instructed in reading the language of their distant homes. Often have I seen him, his honest countenance all alive with intelligence and shrewdness, seated in the midst of a motley crew, paviors, bricklayers, blacksmiths, and such like, now patiently instructing his tall pupils in the first rudiments of literature, now plunged into a hot controversy on some disputed point, and maintaining his ground with inimitable steadiness. Just behind him was a closet, stored with books of reference, which he used in a masterly manner; and I once witnessed a scene of curious up-

roar, provoked by a contumacious tailor, on a point of Popish doctrine, when Sullivan reached backwards to his treasury, produced the decrees of the council of Trent, and silenced them all.

There was also another point on which I found the most perfect sympathy in Sullivan: his attachment to D—, the beloved heartsease, was intense. On the day after D— was called to his Father's house, Sullivan walked down some miles to where I was; and it being Sunday, he only arrived after we were in Church. Entering another pew, I did not immediately observe him: but when at last our eyes met, he burst into tears, and sat down. Never did I see a babe weep more unrestrainedly than that stout and resolute man continued to do during the whole service. I afterwards took him to visit some of our poor lost sheep scattered in that neighbourhood; and most touchingly did he address them. At the grave of D—, ten days afterwards, his ardent Irish feelings again defied all controul. I scarcely saw him since; he was seized with fever, and in the London Hospital he yielded his spirit into the hands of the Lord Jesus: poor in this world, rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven.

Dennis Sullivan's soul would have magnified the Lord, could he have beheld what is now our rejoicing and joy, the reopening of the Irish church, after being for two years and a half closed, under the ministry of one who loves to labour for the outcasts of his native land. There is a work progressing even here: much more in Ireland. Whenever a sifting day arrives, it will amaze the most sanguine to survey the vast quantity of good grain now buried amid the chaff. Self-sown as it were, that is to say, directed by the hand of God without the intervention of presiding men, our Mignonette spreads with rapid increase, and the produce of an inch covers many a rood of ground. Oh, that there were more universally, among the Lord's people, a heart to cherish the young plants, to fence them from the foe, to shelter them from the frost, and spread them yet more widely by the aid of judicious cultivation! What kings and statesmen, ecclesiastics and warriors, have failed in attempting, until the numbness

of despair has paralyzed their efforts, even that is being effected, by the slow and imperceptible, but sure progress of Irish Scripture Readers. The cabin inmate is christianized, and thereby the turbulent, sanguinary rebel becomes a peaceable loyal subject, both to his earthly and his heavenly Ruler. *The axe is laid to the root*; while it lopped the branches, its movements were alike conspicuous and vain: now they are equally retired and successful. To cut at the foundation of the evil, and to lay the foundation of the good work, we must go low; and with the lowly is wisdom. Let us keep our eye upon the operation, raise our heart to the Lord, and extend our hand to the workmen, unwearied as they are in well-doing; we shall then both see and share the sure and precious promise, "In due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

CHAPTER V.

THE GERANIUM.

Among the things that I have most frequently noticed, and for which I cannot account, is the endless diversity of taste, as regards that luxury of creation, the colouring of natural objects, or perhaps I should say the natural colouring of objects. Many good people, I know, nice people too, and amiable, who if you point out to them something on which all the glory of divine tinting has been lavished, will smile, with a benevolent pleasure at seeing you pleased: assent in an easy way to the justness of your admiration; look for a few seconds in the direction pointed out, and then transfer the careless gaze to any other thing, without betraying a consciousness of having lost any gratification by so doing. This renders my garden enjoyments rather unsocial: for although nobody can help assenting to the remarks called forth by those exquisite productions of Almighty skill—unless indeed some cynical mortal whose miserable satisfaction is promoted by checking the delights of others—still it is hard to meet with those who can luxuri-

ate in the petal of, perhaps, some very common flower, so richly as not to make me dread the imputation of an affected extravagance, if I allow my own light to appear. Has any reader, whose eyes perform their office rightly, failed to notice the perfection of beauty contained in an autumnal combination which few can avoid stumbling upon: a large, full cluster of ripe, black grapes, with the untouched bloom purpling each luscious globe, and a bouquet, basket, or pyramid of double Dahlias? If this has escaped your scrutiny, gentle friend, bear it in mind, when the season again comes round, and try whether the utmost stretch of your imagination could suggest an addition, in the particulars of form, colouring, shading, and finishing off, as the artists term it, to what you have grouped. This spectacle, however, partakes in the character of the season: though spotless white, gleaming yellow, glowing scarlet, and airy lilac be mingled in your collection, still, if you impartially admit all the prevailing tints of that splendid flower, you will confess that less of summer brightness than of autumnal seriousness pervades the whole: it is more solid than gay: but still beautiful, so exceedingly beautiful that you may marvel at the miracle of love which has placed such an object in your sin-defiled path through an evil and rebellious world.

But brighter scenes were in my thoughts when commencing this paper: flowers and fruit alone, lovely as they are, do not comprise the charms of colouring which it puzzles me to see any one regard with mere acquiescent approval. The British Museum would be my refuge, during the winter months, only for the chilling effect produced by the sang-froid, with which I am obliged to see many an eye run over the most dazzling objects, in the mineral and zoological departments especially. There are specimens of ore, crystalization, and gems that might almost be expected to cry out against those who cast on them a furtive glance, and walk on: and there is plumage adorning the smaller families of birds, that surpasses gem and flower, inasmuch as it combines the most exquisite beauties of both. I might specify those among the race of humming-birds which really add

the highest lustre of the emerald, the ruby, the topaz, the amethyst, to more than the downy softness of the damask roseleaf. I look up and marvel, as the delicately formed head of the giraffe rises above me on its elegant tapering neck, to a height that makes the tallest man a pigmy: I look forward and tremble, as the whale's huge jaws unfold their memorable portal, or the rhinoceros points his spear-like horn, or the formidable tusks curve upwards from the skeleton elephant: but I look down, and rejoice, with a full flow of adoring praises, when those countless colours that laugh to scorn the thought of imitation, gleam upon me from that minute compendium of all glorious loveliness, the little specks of humming-birds, intermingled as they are with larger specimens of what man cannot do, at the end of six thousand years: but what God did in one short day at their beginning.

I have seen them on the wing, far across the Atlantic, where the swiftness of their motion scarcely allowed me to catch one flash of their gorgeous dyes. They were like those "things unknown," which the poet's imagination sometimes "bodies forth," and then loses the sparkling thought before he can give it "a local habitation and a name." I was told how to catch the fitting gems; but I would almost as soon have pulled, if I were able, a star out of the sky: and often did I plead for them with those who felt not my scruples. Those were days of earthly sorrow and suffering, and spiritual darkness, when fancy alone ministered the delusive opiate, where heavenly balsam was unknown and undesired. Fancy has long since been discarded, as a worthless quack, laden with poisonous drugs; but all the beauteous things of creation seem doubly yea trebly endearing; their loveliness grows upon my sense, and rejoices my heart; and those which were always jewels to the unsanctified mind, are now, with the burnish of a tenfold lustre from the hand that formed them, the mystic gems of Aaron's breast-plate, made holy unto the Lord, and presented before him as a pledge of his own faithfulness towards the Israel of his choice.

This is an entire discursion from the legitimate subject-matter of my paper; but the reader shall know the nature of the

Ignas fatuus that has led my pen astray. Perched upon its little ivory stand, just before me, is a *bona fide* humming-bird, so far at least as the outward form and plumage constitutes the creature, excellently stuffed, "with wings outspread, and forward breast," and I really do not know what precious stone, besides the emerald, might venture to gleam beside it; for, in addition to the very concentration of living green covering the head and breast, there is, upon the throat, what seems to have been caught from the sun's disc, when he sinks in burning crimson behind a mountain's peak. If any one is kind enough to bestow her pity upon me, for falling under the fascination of a stuffed bird, not half so big as our smallest wren, I accept the gift; and gratefully return it, with interest; for pitiable beyond my powers of computation, is the individual who could resist it.

The garden is dreary now: frost whetted a bright sword on the evening of the sixth of November, and triumphed, despite of the warmth diffused by our fireworks, which the reverence due to the Lord's day had prevented our discharging on the fifth. Those who are happy enough to be under ministers neither afraid nor ashamed to acknowledge the merciful interposition of the Most High,—twice repeated to mark the day more emphatically as one of national and individual deliverance,—raised high the voice of devout thanksgiving in what would, but for that interposition, now have been temples of idols, with the abomination that maketh desolate standing where it ought not.

Those who for reasons best known to their spiritual guides, were denied the privilege on which they had calculated, the enjoyment of which was secured to them, as they considered, by the law of the land, while by the law of God its use was made an imperative duty—those disappointed Protestants, thus unexpectedly coerced into an apparent crime of ingratitude and apostacy, from which their inmost souls revolted—I suppose, assembled in their own homes as many as could be there accommodated, and went through the whole of that beautiful service appointed for the day, consoled by knowing that the Lord accepts at the hand of his people not according to that which

they have not, but according to that which they have: that he saw they were not consenting to the purpose and deed of such as despised the ordinance, and that they would rather have performed the most wearisome pilgrimage to join the flock of another minister, than have entered the door of their own church, on that morning, could they have foreseen even as probable, such a violence to their conscientious feelings.

Truly we live in sifting days.

Well, on Monday the bonfires blazed, the squibs exploded; the rockets ascended, and one would have thought the atmosphere was warmed for the next four-and-twenty hours: but Jack Frost, as he is familiarly called, though one can hardly see how he is likely to gain any thing by flattering the ultra-liberalism of the Ins, took a decided part against the Outs, and cut down that night not only all my remaining dahlias, but a whole bevy of green-house plants, entrusted till the morrow to the treacherous unsafe keeping of an open arbour in my garden. "Ah," says the prudent reader, "if you had been housing your plants instead of encouraging your boys to flash gunpowder in the faces of her Majesty's more liberal lieges, this would not have happened."

Very true: I thought of that at the time. But be it known to you my sage friend, that, dearly as I love flowers, and doubly precious as are at this season those which would smile upon me here when all without is dark with clouds or white with snow, far, far dearer to me is the privilege of using any means to keep alive in the young hearts of those boys a continual remembrance of whatsoever bears upon this subject. "When I was a child," says Paul, "I thought as a child, I understood as a child." The imagination and understanding of children are sooner reached through such simple observances: our forefathers were not the fools we are pleased to consider and tacitly declare them to have been. My plants were cut off: but, by the blessing of God, the boys will grow up to be better plants than they: and the Lord grant that each of them may plant his foot upon the rock of true Protestantism, and that the voices which merrily huzza'd the rockets shooting through the air, may be lifted in the loudest fullest

tones of manly power to shout the song of holy exultation over the rescued souls whom they may be chosen to snatch from the iron furnace of Antichristian Rome.

"This is a chapter on birds, or a chapter on gunpowder; but what has it to do with your favourite theme of flowers?" Patience; amid the wreck of my little store one plant escaped, and with it a full tuft of bright blossoms. It was a small scarlet geranium, which seems to have thought its British regimentals demanded a bold stand against Jack Frost. I freely confess that while writing the foregoing, I have felt rather more pugnacious than properly accords with the usual subjects of these papers: but the recollections appertaining to the GERANIUM will smooth down all asperities, and here I summon before me the bushy profusion of one stout old plant of the horse-shoe kind, as it stood in the low, wide window of Jane W's neat little cottage bedroom, an object on which my eye so often fell, both by day and by night, that I seemed to have a particular acquaintance with each several leaf. Jane was a smart, pretty girl, whose smiling face and plump figure alike expressed the good-humour that characterized her disposition. She had lived as nurse-maid in the happy home that for a time sheltered me; and her special charge was the youngest-born of the beloved brother whose presence made that home so happy. The short season of domestic enjoyment closed: the household were scattered in various directions; and Jane became the wife of a young peasant. I was not aware of her location, until a year after her marriage, I was asked whether I knew how ill she was; and whether, as she had been a thoughtless, lively, though always strictly modest girl, I did not think it would be well to visit her. On enquiry, I found that I had only to cross about a mile of the wild, beautiful heath that bordered on my dwelling, to reach her abode. I went, and in one of the neatest cottages for its size that the hand of rustic love could have prepared for a blooming bride, I found her, in bed, in the inner of the two apartments that composed the house. Nothing could exceed the joyousness of her welcome, when beholding me, accompanied with one of those whom it had been her province to tend upon in former days:

and followed by the dumb boy, always a special favourite of Jane's. I was delighted by the warmth of her reception, but startled to behold the change in her appearance. She had been rather coarse-looking, with an embrowned and freckled complexion; she was then fair as a lily, with a tint too beautifully glowing on her dimpled cheeks; and the flashing brilliancy of her dark clear eyes oppressed me. She told me that she had been ill, dangerously ill, from exposing herself to the chilling air on a damp day, before she was sufficiently recovered to leave her room with safety; that her baby seemed also to have taken cold; "but now," she added, "I am getting quite well again, only the doctor wishes me to keep still a while longer." "Well, Jane, you cannot do better than obey the kind doctor's directions: and, meanwhile, if you like it, I will come and read to you something while you are laid by." "Oh, pray do, ma'am: it is so pleasant to see you near me; and to see them also," looking at Jack, and at the little one beside me. Recollections not to be suppressed suffused her eyes with tears; and I felt that I must have recourse to my precious companion, the Bible, which I drew forth, and without farther preface commenced reading, I think, the eighth chapter of St. Matthew.

On the other side of the bed, sate a very respectable-looking woman, whose appearance greatly pleased me: I remarked that when I began reading, she drew back, and concealed her face behind the curtain. Having finished, and received from Jane many smiling thanks, with an earnest invitation to come again very soon, I withdrew, followed by the woman before-mentioned, to whom, when fairly out of Jane's hearing, I anxiously said, "Do you think, nurse, that she is in no danger?" "Oh, ma'am, I fear she is in great danger, but she does not suspect it: the inflammation has fallen on her lungs. Many a sad hour I have passed beside her; but, oh, how joyful I felt when you took out that blessed book, and my child seemed delighted to listen to it!" "What, are you Jane's mother?" "I am, and she has been the child of many prayers, I may say from before her birth, both to her dear father and me, but we have never yet seen any token of spiritual-mindedness in her.

Will you carry on this work in the Lord's name, and tell my poor girl of the Saviour, who, I do trust, will have her yet?" "God be praised," said I, "If I have the prayers of Christian parents in the work, I will never, the Lord helping me, give it up from this moment." I returned to my post next day: Jane was flushed and restless, and her welcome more than cordial. "I hardly thought you would come again this hot day: but mother was sure you would." She gave a bad account of her chest and side; and seemed to delight in telling me her case. When I drew out the book, she evidently prepared to listen more through respect and gratitude, than from any inclination for that employment: but a look of deep anguish from her mother had told me the tale of present danger, and I resolved to proceed decisively. My first object was to convince her of the necessity of a new birth: but she seemed rather to dislike the task of examining herself in the character of a corrupt child of Adam. I then proceeded to that most precious portion of God's word, which I have seen blessed far beyond any other: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," &c. and went on to describe, in the most vivid manner that I could, the scene in the camp of wounded Israelites, with the remedy provided, and the various ways in which that divinely appointed remedy was received or rejected. I never can forget the extraordinary change that came over Jane's fine countenance while she listened. For a time she had kept her eyes on my face, and, through the shooting of frequent pains in the chest, and perhaps a want of interest in the matter, she had tossed about and changed her position many times. After a while, just as I endeavoured most pointedly to transfer the type, to the glorious Antitype, and to express the sublime simplicity of the command, Look on the brazen serpent and live—"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," she withdrew her gaze from me, and raised it with an intent look to the vacant space between the bed's foot and the wall, as though she had been contemplating some object there, while the former restlessness of her body gave place to the stillness of death. I thought at one time she had totally withdrawn her attention: and gently asking, "Are you tired Jane?"

received a fervent grasp from the hand that rested on my arm, a look, quick, as lightning, and an almost vehement "No." A glance over the pillow showed me the mother, her hands clasped, her head bent forward, and such a look fixed on her child as none perhaps, but a mother could give. This roused me to redoubled earnestness; I spoke to Jane personally. I told her of the Saviour whom *she* needed, the ransom paid for *her*, the certainty of acceptance if she came, the inevitable consequences of refusing the call. After that I prayed: and by that bedside I sat and read, and prayed, every day and every second night, for nearly three weeks. Rapid was the sinking of this dear girl; and very dreadful her bodily sufferings; but nothing were they compared with the depth of self-abasement in which she lay at the foot of the Saviour's cross, the acute anguish of an awakened conscience—awakened too by considering the vastness of the price paid for her redemption, and measuring her guilt by its expiation. "Pray—pray," were the first words with which she greeted me, ever after that day. "Pray—pray," was the last sob of her expiring breath: and after she was so reduced as to be unable even to whisper that word, she managed to point with dying finger to the spot where I used to kneel; and her glazing eyes were restless until, though so exhausted I could hardly bend my knee, she saw me there in the attitude of supplication. She gave but one unequivocal proof of that confidence which we so longed to discern in her mind; when her poor little baby, suffering almost as much as herself, was laid to her dying cheek, for the mother's last kiss, she prayed, "Oh, my Saviour, take my baby too! Let my baby come with me to heaven!"

The last few moments of her mortal existence were marked by a character of the deepest peace I ever witnessed—calm, solid, settled, conscious peace. She became most beautiful: a nobleness of expression overspread her countenance, and the last sign for me to kneel and pray seemed rather one to kneel and praise. She laid her head on her dear mother's shoulder, and with a look of indescribable energy and sweetness, breathed out, "To my Father." Some of the bystanders interpreted it as a message of love to her

earthly father: I think it was meant otherwise. Be that as it may, we had no misgivings, no fears, no doubts. Her parents remarked that the way in which the word of salvation had been sent together with the message of death was too striking for us to mistake it. She lies in a rustic grave, with her dear little baby close by: it lingered and pined, under the tender care of its excellent grandmother, in her comfortable house—for they were highly respectable people—but Jane's prayer had been accepted, and the little infant followed her to heaven.

The homely horse-shoe geranium will ever be dear to me, above many of its brighter brethren: for it formed the curtain of Jane's little window, and was a cherished favourite of hers. I scattered some of its flowers over the beautiful corpse, and rejoiced in the wonderful work of Him who had planted her, a tree of righteousness in the garden of his glorious kingdom.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CATHEDRAL.

THE new year is in the path of life, like one of those little alcoves, or rustic benches, placed at intervals amid the beauties of some vast and picturesque domain, where the visiter is invited to rest awhile, and to contemplate from points of interest the scenery through which he is passing. We walk as along a vista, where the onward prospect is wrapped in impenetrable darkness: but what we have already trod lies open, under a broad beam, inviting retrospection: and, to me at least, every ensuing stage of the progress imparts an aspect of more mellowed loveliness to that which lies in the distance. I look back and realize in all their minutiae those scenes which my foot can never—never tread again. Or, if it should be mine to revisit the bare scenery of those endeared spots, so changed they are—so stripped of all that rendered them precious, or so altered are my own circumstances, feelings and prospects, that they would at best appear like the dry, artificially preserved

figure of what had once bent on me bright looks of life and love. Far rather would I retrace them as they were, in the chambers of vivid imagery, than tread again their real and visible precincts.

This feeling appears to be almost universal among mankind. Even to those who seem to gather an accession of happiness with every fleeting year—and surely they are few—the past wears many a charm of softening recollection, extorting sometimes the sigh of fond regret over what is for ever gone. Whether the consciousness of life's limited duration, indissolubly connecting with former times a certainty that such a portion of our allotted space has actually fled, never to be recalled, may not influence us more than we are aware of when indulging such reminiscences, I cannot pretend to decide: I think that it does.

To one who has been brought out of the world, after participating largely in its spirit and rejoicing in many things opposed to the love of God, it is sometimes wonderful to contemplate the extent to which what divines call the religious affections have been excited, long before a ray of the true light had visited their minds. Feelings even rapturously devotional may have been enkindled, and the soul, as it were, borne upwards into regions purely spiritual, while yet the heart was altogether estranged from God, and unreservedly yielded to his enemies—to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. I frequently recall with no small bewilderment of mind the emotions excited within the walls of an edifice with which many a melting recollection is closely interwoven. Often do I, in imagination, again pace its majestic aisles, as was my wont in childhood and in early youth, bending many an awe-struck look on "the high embowered roof," admiring on its "storied windows," the broad dark depth of purple, crimson, and all those mellow colours through which the day-beam struggled to look in upon the antique tracery of richly-carved stalls; and the massive effigies, recumbent on their sculptured tombs, where generations of living men had approached to gaze and to wonder, and had retired to perish; making way for a succeeding race, who should in turn behold and depart, and die, even as they.

I pass on to the singularly fine quadrangle of cloisters, girding in a burial-ground where surely every particle of dust must once have been instinct with the spirit of life,—so many centuries had contributed their relics of mouldering humanity to swell its crowded hillocks. Never have I since beheld a cemetery so rich in the rank honours of long, wild grass, springing through crevices of broken gravestones—themselves scarcely less green from mossy incrustations, and meandering stains of damp—waiving in the perpetual draught of air, and peering, as it seemed, through the black but beautiful arches that bounded their territory, to arrest the glance of some thoughtless passer-by, with the mute but impressive demand, "What is man?"

So vivid is the recollection of this familiar spot, that the light air now fanning me while I write seems tainted with that peculiar savour, and loaded with that indescribable chill, which no atmospheric change could overcome. The breeze of the cloisters was always stirring, always dank, and always fraught with desolation. There was that in it which repressed the buoyancy of youthful spirits, sobering the mind into something akin with the surrounding objects. I have felt my giddy mirthfulness subside into pensive thought as I slackened the pace frequently amounting to a run, while seeking in the cloisters that exercise which perchance a stormy day denied me elsewhere; and when a little side-door opened, giving ingress to the band of youthful choristers, habited in their every-day surplices of dusky purple, and I marked them through the intercepting arches winding their silent way towards the great body of the church, for the performance of evening service, I have been irresistibly drawn to follow their steps; and, taking my seat in the recess of a dark but lofty side-pew, to join in the devotions that had formed no part of my plan in visiting the cloister promenade.

It was on such occasions that I have been rapt into something so nearly resembling the fervour of true piety as to yield a clue to the otherwise inexplicable power of those delusions which blind the devotees of Rome. The impulse was certainly from without, and from around—not from within or above. Nothing can more beauti-

fully harmonize than twilight shadows and the interior of an antique building, lofty, massive, and richly sculptured. Even the fading of those gorgeous tints upon its gothic windows seemed to speak something of the fashion of this world passing away: and when the deep slow tones of a majestic organ, touched by a master's hand, were melting as they seemed to mount, and finally lost amid the recesses of the lofty roof—when the succeeding stillness was broken by a single voice reading, perhaps, in the lesson for the day, some exquisitely sublime passage from Isaiah—when the dark-blue lining of my cushioned and curtained recess almost assumed the semblance of a funeral canopy, and a dim, unearthly character rested on all around—my feelings have so largely partaken in that character, as to impress me with the confident belief that I was holding high and full-communion with HIM whom I neither loved, nor feared, nor desired to know beyond the fictitious excitements of such moments.

Under these circumstances, and beneath the closing shades of a dull October evening, I well remember the effect produced on my mind by the appointed lesson—the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians: I was very young, and had never paid attention to that magnificent portion of holy writ. It was most exquisitely read, in a deep sonorous voice by one who at least felt the poetry of the composition, and as such did justice to it. Certain I am, that it brought me into a new and strange proximity to heavenly things, which remained long after the thrilling emotion of that hour had passed away. This recollection often humbles and alarms me; for now that the Lord has, in his abundant mercy, drawn aside the veil under which all spiritual meanings lay hidden from my view, I cannot always realize the intensity of feeling which marked that well-remembered period. It is well for the child of God that he is cautioned by many wise counsellors against the illuiveness of momentary impulses, in their origin as likely to be earthly and material, as heavenly and spiritual. Often, when elated in what seems a highly devotional frame, I suddenly put to myself the searching question, "Wherein does this differ from the enthusiasm enkindled

within the walls of my own, my beautiful cathedral?"

How beautiful that cathedral was, at the time when I fondly called it my own, is matter of history now. The hand of modern innovation has so reformed its supposed defects, so industriously applied the levelling brush of the whitewasher to its deversified knots of fruit, and flower, and story, and heraldic blazonry—so cropped, and trimmed, and planed away its redundant fretwork—so shamed the old grey stones of its venerable bulk by the spruce addenda of epic-and-span masonry, that there are few pilgrimages which I would not undertake in preference to one that should lead me to the shrine of my early devotion—the beloved memento of my joyous childhood. Whatever mania I may be subject to, the mania of reckless innovation will ever be abhorrent to my soul. I love to look upon the monuments of my country's greatness—I love to walk round about them, to mark well her bulwarks, to number her towers, and to mount guard, if so it might be given me, over every grey fragment of what the Lord so long has blessed to her safety and prosperity. My cathedral, like other British institutions, "has braved a thousand years, the battle and the breeze," and yet it stands seemingly prepared to endure for another thousand. With my consent, the finger of the spoiler should never have touched it; and spoliation is too often the true word for what, in our day, goes by the name of renovation. Yet even where the hand of judgment has unquestionably interposed to strengthen, and that of taste to improve the objects of our early attachment, how reluctantly do we trace the alteration that has removed, or glossed over some remembered peculiarity! A blemish it might be: but it formed a link in the delicate chain of fond recollections; and its removal is a robbery of our treasure-house.

The place of my birth was remarkable for its architectural relics of antiquity; and the surrounding country displayed many an old-fashioned fabric, from the venerable mansion that had cradled a long line of nobles, to the humble but substantial farm-house, with its narrow gables, its jutting eaves, and low, wide casements set deep in frame-work of rudely carved

stone. It has been my lot for many years to dwell in places as dissimilar from these early haunts as are the elegant triflings of modern art from the laboured and enduring workmanship of former ages. Hence, when my rambles bring me suddenly within view of some time-worn edifice—from which no part of England is altogether free—the sensations excited are indescribably strong. A chord is touched, that seems to awake an echo from every little cell of slumbering memory; and I am carried back to times and scenes, thoughts and feelings, wherein it is hard to say whether the painful or the pleasurable emotion predominates.

Can the Christian then dwell with fondness on days that came and went, leaving him as they found him, living without hope and without God in the world? Ought not the retrospection to be one of unmingled shame and sorrow, while, viewed in the light of gospel truth, each event furnishes a memento of his rebellion against the Most High? Such thoughts have troubled me, I confess; but there is one consideration that blends very sweetly with the reminiscences of by-gone days—it is beautifully expressed in the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness. . . . Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee." To lose the remembrance of former days were to forget the wonders which the Lord hath wrought: and to retrace them with gloomy repugnance were to rob Him of much glory due unto His name. Oh, there are many who sported with me through the airy cloisters, and snatched the long grass as they bounded by, who trifled on through maturer years, and suddenly passed away to a world where they never had sent one serious thought before them. There are others, still robust and active denizens of busy life, whose every hope is bounded by the visible earth to the dust of which their souls tenaciously cleave, who recognize not the long-suffering of a waiting Saviour in the time thus given, nor in their occasional disappointments the chastening hand of a Father. And some there are, who, led by paths of endless variety, have reached the narrow

way that tends Zionward, and, meeting with the companion of their earliest years, can take delight in raising a mutual Ebenezer of remembrances and thanksgivings with which no stranger may intermeddle. "The God which led me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil:"—who can take up that grateful ascription of praise, without permitting his mind to wander back and realize the days wherein he was guided by One whom then he had not known!

I have been mercifully kept from running into any extreme of doctrine, fully convinced that both extremes are alike removed from the solid and simple truth; but the pre-ordaining love of God in Christ, electing from the mass of self-destroying wanderers some whom he would compel to come in, while others, to whom the door of invitation was opened equally wide through the all-atoning efficacy of the Saviour's cross, would despise and perish—this precious fact throws a sun-beam over every chequered scene that memory can revisit. "Goodness and mercy have followed me all my life long." I cannot name an hour, or point to a spot, where they ceased the pursuit so long eluded by the self-doomed sinner. Full well do I remember how they whispered with me in the cloistered aisle, and spoke aloud in the gracious words that were to me but as a very lovely song. My stubborn rebellion is a monument of my Lord's sparing mercy—my wilful wanderings of His pursuing goodness. If no change had passed on my beautiful cathedral, I would hasten to revisit every haunt beneath its arching roof; and there would I recall the thoughts of other years, and own the Spirit of God to have been continually pleading with my spirit, beseeching me to turn, and I would not. Methinks I could now read aright the lesson of mortality, so strangely misinterpreted before; and find cause for double endearment, through the operation of divine grace, in what was always fondly cherished by natural feeling. Surely the blessedness of the heavenly Cannan will be enhanced by a broad, clear view of the wilderness through which the Lord led his stiff-necked and rebellious, but finally subdued and rescued people. We rob God of much glory when we avert

our eyes from what has been. He promises to cast our sins into the depths of the sea—are we, therefore, to bury his mercies in oblivion? He says that he will remember our iniquities no more; and we, while musing on the days that are past, must give the glad response, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE MEETING.

THERE are times and places where individuals are thrown together under circumstances that leave an indelible impression: though not a name should be known, nay, nor a face distinguished, yet may the keenest interest be excited. It is difficult to prove this, unless to travellers; and, among travellers, perhaps to those who have traversed the mighty billows. Of all the meetings or partings that have moved my feelings through life, I remember none so closely united, or so intensely exciting during their momentary continuance, as the greeting, in mid-Atlantic, of a vessel which bounded athwart our track.

For about twenty days we had lost sight of land; and not an object had interposed between the overarching heavens and the broad line of waters that rose, in the vast circle of a clear horizon, to meet their azure bend, save the little sea-birds which occasionally appeared astern of our large ship, now stepping the waves with playful grace, now perching on the tall mast-head, and anon stretching the wing we knew not whither. The sailors considered the frequent appearance of these birds as indicative of an approaching storm; but nothing resembling it occurred until our five weeks voyage was nearly ended. The sameness of the scene was wearisome to those who merely regarded the sky as air, and the sea as water, and longed for a more substantial element whereon to expatiate: those who have closely watched their aspect can attest that in the heavens there is but little monotony, in the mighty ocean none—except during that most tormenting season, a dead calm. I was de-

lighted with the daily view of the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the great deep; never wearying of the contemplation. Yet when, after floating, a solitary thing, always the seeming centre of an unbroken circle, our ship had pursued for three weeks her appointed way, I was not a whit less delighted than the veriest yawner on board to discern in the far offing, at early morning, a speck, the rapid increase of which assured us that she was upon our track, and gave us promise of a speedy approach. We gazed for a while, and then descended to our breakfast.

A lively breeze that favoured both vessels, though sailing in different directions, had brought us very near before we again repaired to the deck: and had the times been warlike, with an enemy ranging the seas, the eagerness of inquiry could not have been more intense than through mere curiosity it now appeared. What is she? where from? whither bound? and numerous other questions, passed from mouth to mouth, as gravely as though some secret information had been afforded to the sundry individuals to whom they were addressed, on a point where all were necessarily in the dark. Meantime the ship made right for us; we hoisted what has been beautifully called "the meteor flag of England;" and while its broad folds rose heavily on the breeze, casting a shadow over the sparkling foam behind the rudder, our new acquaintance unfurled her striped flag, studded with stars, announcing herself an American.

It was not very long since the hoisting of those several ensigns would have been the signal for a hostile onset; and the jealousy of that unnatural rivalry had by no means faded from the bosoms of either country; yet, crossing as we then did each other's path, I can truly affirm that to myself and to the greater number of our passengers the vessel seemed to contain the most endeared company of interesting people that we could have met. National distinctions and national animosities were forgotten: we saw the first party of human beings that had enlivened our lonely way for weeks—like us they had left a home behind them; like us they were seeking a desired haven. They were, like us, exposed to elemental changes; an uncertain sky above, and unfathomable depth

beneath their feet, and a frail dwelling of boards, which seemed tossed like a plaything on the strong billows that bore it swiftly past. No object is more strikingly beautiful than a ship freely bounding over the deep, when seen from another ship in similar motion. So light, so grand, so majestically true—"her march is o'er the mountain waves," which she seems to cut with mathematical precision, while rising on their swell, and yielding to their downward sweep; her mast with graceful inclination pointing as she reels, her white sails glittering in the sunbeam, her broad banner undulating on the breeze, and so, a glorious gallant thing, she comes and is gone, and melts into a speck, soon to be lost in impenetrable distance.

Thus it was with our transatlantic friend. We neared so closely that every individual on either deck was distinctly seen, while rapidly trumpeted, the mutual question and answer sounded cheerily across the intervening billows, that hoarsely murmured their own discourse. All pressed to look, and bent to listen; and feelings of pleasurable good-will were depicted in every countenance. The interview, however, passed like thought; a very few seconds had spread a long line of waters between us; the banner of England, no farther required at its post aloft, was lowered upon deck; and I sat down, delighted to nestle among its cherished folds, to indulge a meditation not so profitable as the same scene would now, through divine grace afford.

Often have I recalled the beauty of that spectacle, with the interesting concomitants that fixed it so deeply on my memory. I have traced a parallel in the voyage of life, supposing that we have launched forth under the pilotage of ONE who has engaged to bring us into the haven where we would be. A solitary Christian is like a vessel in the mighty main, following the invisible steps of Him whose way is in the sea, and His path in the deep waters. To such a voyager, turn where he will, the point most interesting is that where the scene of his pilgrimage melts as it were into heaven. The worldly triflers who flock around are regarded but as the idle birds of ocean, portending only storm and shipwreck to him, if abiding in his company. He is content

to be alone, if so the Lord will; but should a fellow pilgrim be brought within his track, of whom he may plainly discern that he also is bound for the haven of peace, how far beyond the mere ties of earthly kindred and companionship is the strength of that interest excited! Though it be but the interview of a few moments, though they part with no probability of again encountering one another on the ocean of life, though in all individual peculiarities of station, name, and circumstance, each continues a stranger to the other, long will the look of affection pursue his receding steps, and the heart-breathed ejaculation ascend with intercessory desire to their common Father, that the brother thus unexpectedly brought within personal knowledge may go on his way rejoicing, and find a quiet port in the land of everlasting rest.

It is here that the real unity of the true church of Christ is manifested: no believer can look upon another believer as one strange to his sight, and uninteresting to his mind. He who by the Spirit of adoption has been brought to call God, Abba, Father, cannot but recognize a brother in each one who enjoys the same privilege: and sad is the state of the Christian whose affections go not forth towards every member of the family of faith! That many such there are, is too apparent; and that they are the least happy of God's children is no less plain. If we love not the brethren, we lack the evidence which the Lord himself has pointed out as distinguishing those who have passed from death unto life; if we love them coldly, mistrustfully, indifferently, it is hard to prove that such a feeling deserves the name of love.

There is an *esprit du corps* belonging to the professors of serious religion, very little akin to that zeal which would lay down its life for the brethren. It is found in partizans of every class; even among those who are banded under the immediate command of the Arch-enemy, to assail the truths of revelation. There is another species of attachment, passing with many who feel it for genuine love to the brethren; but which, if traced to its source, might be found to originate in the consciousness that among worldly men the people called evangelicals are held in

sovereign contempt—regarded as subtle rogues, or half-crazed fanatics. This is mortifying, and the assurance of it renders an avowed follower of Christ ill at ease among those who so behold him. In the presence of a true Christian he is sure to be highly esteemed for his Master's sake; and thus complacency towards the brethren may proceed from unmixed self-love, and wear the semblance even to ourselves of that with which it has no connexion whatever. If a vessel at sea, perhaps weakly armed, descries in time of war a strange sail approaching, no doubt the hoisting of a friendly flag inspires delight and confidence proportioned to the evil that might have accrued from falling in with a powerful enemy; but who will say that the greeting is one of such disinterested love and sympathy as we exchanged with our fellow-voyager, when no peril was apprehended, nor any advantage to be gained by falling in with her on the broad and peaceful seas!

Evangelical profession in our day spreads wide; and it is in many places so extremely shallow that those who venture on its seeming uniformity are frequently run aground, and left with damage to deplore their credulity. This I have experienced; for more deep and heartless villany never glared from the world's most brazen and unblushing front than I have encountered beneath the smooth aspect of sanctimonious piety. It would be well for the glory of God and the gospel, if all who are similarly deceived would raise a beacon on such shoals, to warn their fellow-believers of concealed perils; but the false charity which shrinks from exposing one real hypocrite, lest the world should consider him a fair sample of those among whom he has presumptuously numbered himself, inflicts an injury more deep, more pervading, and more abiding, than the unmasking of a thousand deceivers would do.

Christians are aware that such characters exist among godly professors; they know that it requires time and observation to detect them, screened as they are by the culpable weakness already mentioned; and thus a darkening shade of suspicion is cast over the whole body; and the evil is cherished, until it will act as an extinguisher on the last glimmering light of

love "for the brethren." St. Paul was not uncharitable, when he exhorted the Corinthian church to purge out the leaven from among them: our venerable reformers were not uncharitable when they framed the rubric excluding from the Lord's table such as, having wronged a neighbour, should neglect to make fitting reparation; but we are truly uncharitable, both to ourselves and others, while we suffer the mere badge of a party, the mere verbal shibboleth of religious phraseology, and the tinkling cymbal of sound doctrines issuing from feigned lips, to deter us from plucking these weeds out of the Lord's garden; or, if we lack power so to do, from legibly writing "poison" over them, that the children may no longer shrink from wholesome plants, through dread of a concealed sting.

Is then every infirmity of temper, every incautious step, every injudicious proceeding, every lamented inconsistency that the follower of Christ is betrayed into, to be proclaimed, and the stumbling disciple held forth to the church's anathema and the world's contempt? God forbid! "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." It is not to the infirmities of real Christians, but to the worldliness, the covetousness, the malignity, the calumniating bitterness of those who have thrust themselves into their company, that we trace the lack of confiding love among God's people. The flesh may so lust against the Spirit in a regenerate man, that he may be betrayed into many inconsistencies, and be a perpetual grief unto himself; he is to be tenderly admonished, prayed over, and assisted in the struggle. But when a man is known by those who have studied him well to be capable of destroying a neighbour's character through envy and malignity, or selling it for filthy lucre's sake—when he has been found to make his religious way of talking a cloak for licentiousness, for ambition, and worldly advantage, he ought to be so dealt with by those who are godly, as either to alarm him from his sin or to shame him out of his false profession.

There may be points of natural weakness in a man's character that prevent our altogether confiding in him; but if the life of God be manifest in his soul, by the simple walk of faith and a holy conversation, are we not bound, yea, constrained to love him? The Lord dwells in His church, which is the company of all faithful people: He dwells in them individually; and, as being made temples of the living God, we cannot but honour and love them, for the Deity that abides within. Oh how tender, how respectful should we be to all the brethren, if we rightly considered this! We should not grieve, we should not provoke, we should not dare to malign and condemn them, if we bore in mind that the Lord is there.

Meeting on the troublous waves of life, we should affectionately recollect what storms from above may await their onward course—what enemies may be watching around to swallow them up—what rocks may lurk below to make shipwreck of their faith and conscience. These are touching considerations to such as know the severity of that internal warfare wherein the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, keep the believer tossing and trembling on the waters of a strife that is only to end with his mortal voyage. However incommunicative we may be of our personal experiences, we yet are conscious that fightings without, and fears within, will intrude like the voice of a rising tempest, to mar the gladness of our most joyous hours. Such conflicts as we feel to be in ourselves, we know must belong to our brethren also; and is not this a plea for the tenderest sympathy? Meeting as strangers and pilgrims, uncertain whether we shall ever again behold them until we stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, surely we should bear them, and their probable trials, on our hearts before the Lord, in prayer; and extending the hand of cordial salutation, we should follow their track with the eye of sympathizing love, breathing the language of the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."

CHAPTER VIII.

IRELAND.

"Oh that it were with me as in days past!" is an aspiration which the natural heart of man seems prone to utter, though far apart from the original context. Few, indeed, if any, of God's people can look back upon that spring-tide season of first faith and love without having cause to ask, with tearful regret,

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?

But among those who never saw or sought Him, there is a frequent recurrence to past times, as having savoured of happiness comparatively unalloyed. Yet, while that past was still the present, it had, in general, its attendant clouds and discomforts in sufficient abundance to render something antecedent to it a subject of like regrets. It appears that as time rolls on, the anxieties of the day—for the principal drawbacks on our felicity are imaginary evils, and groundless forebodings—pass off, and are forgotten; while the actual enjoyments graciously permitted leave an indelible record on the mind. I have sometimes tried, under the pressure of great uneasiness, to reduce two scriptural precepts to practice. Forgetting those things that are behind, and taking no thought for the morrow—nor even for the succeeding hour—I have viewed the actual *present* in its naked reality, and found that, like it, my trouble was diminished to a mere point. I perceived that some injury or vexation, recently encountered, was still ranking in my heart: while the anticipation of what was presently to be done or said very much increased the excitement. Banishing both of these, and looking on the passing moment only standing before the Lord a living miracle of His mercy and long-suffering, with no other positive certainty in prospect than that not one word of His good promise should ever fail, I have actually paused in astonishment at finding how large a portion of what, strictly speaking, was non-existent, entered into the composition of my grievance. These little arrests for close self-examination are

exceedingly useful: and if conducted on the right principle, as in the presence of him who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men, they are of a very humbling tendency. Ingratitude for the mercy that has wafted one cloud away, and mistrust of the love that presides over such as are yet afar off, will be found interwoven with every murmuring thought of our hearts, breathed in every complaint that escapes our lips. Without the gifts of memory and prescience, we should indeed be as the brutes: still it is melancholy to reflect how constantly we use them as weapons of rebellious ingratitude against the Giver.

By applying this rule to the events of by-gone days, I am enabled to detect many a grievous act of sin in what, at the time, appeared but well-founded sorrow—sin that would never have been repented of, because never discovered by me. Often, when all has been bright around me, and the mercy of God was most signally manifested in guidance or preservation, has my heart secretly fretted and raged against His decrees, because the past and the probable future were dark to my sight. I can recall such an instance, connected with most endearing recollections, and now looked back upon as the very door of blessings, temporal and spiritual, which may furnish a theme for songs of everlasting thanksgiving and praise.

I will not say exactly how many years since I first bent my way towards the sister isle. It is enough to state that I was then a very fair specimen of national and spiritual pride: both equally groundless. My nationality consisted in a supreme contempt of every thing not exclusively English, with a clause of peculiar scorn and detestation of whatever might happen to be Irish. My spirituality was a deep conviction of being one of the most deserving people living: I read the Bible very frequently; I was a regular and punctual church-goer; I said prayers in private, did many good works (in my own estimation) and suffered much evil unresistingly. Upon these things I built such a confident hope, or rather claim, for eternal life, that—I shudder to recollect it—I had more than once seen myself in the very jaws of destruction without a single doubt or fear as to my eternal portion. In this state of

mind, I undertook a reluctant journey and voyage, resolved to anticipate only unalloyed miseries. Truth to say, my retrospections were sufficiently dark to throw a fearful gloom over what was to come, in the eyes of one who had not yet seen the purposes of divine love in the chastisement of a proud, self-righteous rebel.

With a bitter spirit, and downcast eyes that shunned the very sight of the land, I obeyed the summons to come on deck, when the packet which had been all day sailing against the wind was moored at the pier of Howth. It was two or three hours after midnight; but a most brilliant full moon threw its soft clear light on every object, rendering any artificial aid unnecessary. A plank was laid from the vessel to the shore, by which the passengers landed; and as the tide was then low, the inclination of the plank was very great—at another time I might have hesitated to ascend the steep and slippery way; but I was heedless, reckless of every thing. No principle of willing obedience led me in the path of duty, but a sort of sudden acquiescence that I dignified with the name of resignation, and considered highly meritorious. I had been so tardy, that I was nearly forgotten—a lonely voyager, without one person on whose kindness I had any other claim than what their own generous commiseration spontaneously acknowledged—and I fancy the sailors had commenced withdrawing the plank when my approach caused them to replace it. I mounted the ship's side, and proceeded about three steps along the narrow footing, when a heave of the vessel unsteadied it—the upper part began to slide, and in a second or two I should have been engulfed low in the dark waters between the ship and the pier, with scarcely a human possibility of rescue; but one of the gentlemen flung himself prostrate on the ground, seizing with a powerful grasp the receding plank; while a sailor jumping on the ship's bulwarks caught me round the knees, to support my tottering steps, and another of the passengers, extending his hands, took mine, and drew me forward.

I sprang ashore, with a careless laugh, my usual mask for a half-broken heart; and while receiving the fervent welcome of those kind-hearted Irishmen, heightened into agitation by my recent peril and

escape, what was the language of my secret thoughts? Adoring gratitude? No. Neither the watery grave from which I had that moment been snatched, nor the sense of present safety, health, and comfort, nor the soft sweet moon looking down upon the velvet sod, and marking the church tower, gleaming on the white head-stones of many a rustic grave, nor the animated warmth of those who had so promptly interposed to rescue me—could elicit one throb of right feeling. Dark as the depths where I might have been sinking with my ungrateful spirit; and while I courteously thanked my welcoming companions, the breathing of my soul was, "Would that your country were in the depth of the sea, and I anywhere else!" But there was one thing that exceeded my rebellion: and that was the mercy of my long-suffering God.

With feelings of undiminished gloom and hatred, I sat down in the parlour of the hotel, until the morning should be sufficiently advanced to admit of our proceeding to Dublin. With two other passengers, I shared a post-chaise; and as we approached the Irish metropolis, even my unwilling looks were attracted and gratified, by the beauty of many white buildings, the country seats of its inhabitants, scattered among plantations of exquisite verdure, and reflecting the early rays of a cloudless sun. While descending a hilly road, the horses took fright, the postillion was thrown, and with fearful velocity we were borne along by the unchecked animals at full gallop. Let those who understand the peril of my deed judge of the reckless feeling that prompted it: I quietly put my hand out, opened the door, and gathering my long riding-habit about me, threw myself from the carriage. Of course, I fell prostrate, but quite unhurt, excepting a graze on the hand; and, jumping up, exclaimed, as I brushed the dust from my face, "Well, I suppose I am to love the soil, after all; for I have kissed it in spite of myself!" And did I not love it?—do I not love it? The Lord knoweth. He who marked my first entrance there by two such awful deliverances, can alone say how deep, how fervent, how all-pervading is the love of Ireland, dear Ireland, in every vein of my heart.

The chaise had been stopped immedi-

ately after my desperate leap; and I returned to it, more amused by the excessive terror that I had occasioned to my companions, than impressed by the manifestation of divine power in preserving me. I need not pursue the journey, nor relate the deep waters of affliction, through which I proudly and unflinchingly held my way, filled, even from the first, with love for the people whom I had so shamefully prejudged, but not reconciled to Him whom I professed to serve and adore, until he visited me with strange and agonizing convictions of my lost and sinful state, which I divulged to no human being: and then, by the power of the Holy Spirit, through His own precious word alone, apart from all other instrumentality, showed me the atoning Lamb, filled me with joy and peace in believing, and after months of sweet and blissful communion with him, brought me among His dear children—even those who are now suffering persecution and affliction for His sake and the gospel.

Among by-gone days, that is indeed with me a memorable one which welcomed me to the green sod of Ireland. The impatient stamp with which I delighted, as it were, to tread her underfoot, when landing on the northern point of her magnificent bay, contrasted with the heart-broken reluctance that lingered to pick up a pebble from the last jutting little promontory of sand, when re-embarking from its southern side after several years' sojourn—is vivid in my recollection. Deep sorrow was my portion at either period; but, with outward circumstances nearly similar, oh how changed its aspect! I had come thither under the impression that human suffering was a suitable atonement for human sin; and while conscience bore me witness that I had, from the earliest dawn of reason, frequently transgressed the known commands of God, I found in the pressure of early and severe affliction not only what I considered a sufficient punishment for those transgressions, but enough even to turn the balance in my favour, and to render me a claimant on the justice of the Most High! Because in the particular trial of my life I had not perhaps merited at the hand of man what I was called on to endure, I stood boldly forth as a specimen of injured innocence

often appealing to the Searcher of hearts in the language that even David could not have used, except in a typical character, and prophetic strain. I gathered into one view the sorrows of past years, and many a comfortless anticipation of the future, clouding over with their needless gloom every little interval of sunshine and repose that was graciously permitted for the refreshment of a weary spirit. But this picture is too vile to dwell upon: what was the other? A lengthened catalogue of sorrows endured; a darker prospect of threatened woes; a rending asunder of the sweetest ties that Christian friendship ever formed and sanctified—an exile from the country that I had learned to love, as a Beth-el of spiritual enjoyment, and a return to that which had never afforded me a privilege worth having, apart from the endearments of a home no longer mine. Yet, amid many sinful repinings and unbelieving fears, there was a peace, nay a joy, passing expression. In all these things I saw the natural consequence of inbred corruptions and actual sin, to which I had learned to trace every blot upon this fair creation; and in such consequences, I saw the heinousness of that sin, and its eternal wages at the hand of a pure and holy God. I beheld the mighty ransom which had delivered me from going down into the pit; I confessed the hand that had led me so far; and while through a mist of tears I looked northward across the beautiful bay, remembering my first arrival, with all its consequences, my soul responded to the language of dear John Newton—

Determin'd to save, he watch'd o'er my path,
When, Satan's blind slave, I sported with wrath,
And would he have taught me to trust in His name,
And thus far have brought me, to put me to shame?

No: the scenes themselves hardly presented such a contrast as the feelings that prevailed. Night, a troubled sea, a dark deep gulf of sullen waters intervening between my ship and the perpendicular side of the pier, with none about me but the casual acquaintances of a day, who knew no more of me and mine than I did of them, and a country that was to me far worse than indifferent—this was my arrival. My departure was on a brilliant summer morning; my path along the shining sand, that seemed gradually to

melt and mingle in the blue rippling waters, playing beneath the sunbeam, and bearing on their bosom the light boat prepared to convey us to the steamer, which was moored in the bay. Around were some whose eyes, like mine, overflowed with natural sorrow, while their hearts glowed with the delicious anticipation of eternal re-union in a better land. Not a feeling of my soul but was understood and reciprocated: and the tie formed below *could not* be broken: for a crucified Redeemer formed the connecting link. One who even then was preparing to bid a long farewell to his own sweet isle, on a mission of love to the souls of distant heathen, led my reluctant step into the boat: and at the moment of seating me there, he repeated, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." Yes, I think I was then humbled under the overpowering conviction that such a vile, guilty, proud, thankless, rebellious atom as I, when embarking on that broad and beautiful water, was and had been from eternity the object of a love which, manifested in due time, had assured me that, whatsoever might be my coming trials, in all—all—I should be more than conqueror through Him who had so loved me. Oh, the depth of the riches of that redeeming love!

But I was sorrowful still; and sorrow in one shape or another, yea, sorrow upon sorrow, is blended with every tie that binds me to Ireland. I would not have it otherwise; I would not forget that this is the day of her calamity, and that to weep over her now is the best token of being one day permitted to rejoice and joy with her. Now, while her faithful witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and her believing children, who work the works of God in faith and prayer, are discouraged and put to shame; while violence and fraud are connived at, and an idolatrous apostacy cherished, and the wicked walk on every side, and the vilest of men are exalted—it is well that my reminiscences of Ireland should partake in the sombre hue of her destiny—that the dearest spot in her wide boundary should be a grave, and the saddest of my thoughts still wander thitherward.

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And thus far have brought me, to put me to shame?

No: the scenes themselves hardly presented such a contrast as the feelings that prevailed. Night, a troubled sea, a dark deep gulf of sullen waters intervening between my ship and the perpendicular side of the pier, with none about me but the casual acquaintances of a day, who knew no more of me and mine than I did of them, and a country that was to me far worse than indifferent—this was my arrival. My departure was on a brilliant summer morning; my path along the shining sand, that seemed gradually to

melt and mingle in the blue rippling waters, playing beneath the sunbeam, and bearing on their bosom the light boat prepared to convey us to the steamer, which was moored in the bay. Around were some whose eyes, like mine, overflowed with natural sorrow, while their hearts glowed with the delicious anticipation of eternal re-union in a better land. Not a feeling of my soul but was understood and reciprocated: and the tie formed below *could not* be broken: for a crucified Redeemer formed the connecting link. One who even then was preparing to bid a long farewell to his own sweet isle, on a mission of love to the souls of distant heathen, led my reluctant step into the boat: and at the moment of seating me there, he repeated, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." Yes, I think I was then humbled under the overpowering conviction that such a vile, guilty, proud, thankless, rebellious atom as I, when embarking on that broad and beauteous water, was and had been from eternity the object of a love which, manifested in due time, had assured me that, whatsoever might be my coming trials, in all—all—I should be more than conqueror through Him who had so loved me. Oh, the depth of the riches of that redeeming love!

But I was sorrowful still; and sorrow in one shape or another, yea, sorrow upon sorrow, is blended with every tie that binds me to Ireland. I would not have it otherwise; I would not forget that this is the day of her calamity, and that to weep over her now is the best token of being one day permitted to rejoice and joy with her. Now, while her faithful witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and her believing children, who work the works of God in faith and prayer, are discouraged and put to shame; while violence and fraud are connived at, and an idolatrous apostacy cherished, and the wicked walk on every side, and the vilest of men are exalted—it is well that my reminiscences of Ireland should partake in the sombre hue of her destiny—that the dearest spot in her wide boundary should be a grave, and the saddest of my thoughts still wander thitherward.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OAK-STUMP.

SOMETHING of recent occurrence has recalled to my mind a circumstance, which, at the time amused me greatly, and furnished not a few subsequent reflections. I can and do vouch for the truth of the incident; it really happened: but to render it less incredible than it might appear to an English reader, I must observe that in sundry districts of Ireland they do not always carry the finish of a kitchen so far as we do, in country houses of even high respectability, and of the most substantial description. That part of the fitting most frequently dispensed with is the floor. Boards or bricks are little known, in some places; and where a few flags are laid down, so many portions become detached in process of time, or sink unequally into the soil, that the pavement is but a partial, irregular affair. I do not mean this as a general description: but I have often seen it so in houses of large dimensions, and possessing luxurious accommodations; while, either from a stretch of hospitality on the part of the servants, or as a security against nightly depredation, the fowls were admitted snugly to roost among the long rafters, or other conveniences, beneath the warm and sheltering roof. This sketch may furnish a hint to unravel the mystery which, had it occurred in a well-bricked or dry-boarded apartment, would have been altogether too marvellous for the grasp of any rational credulity.

It was in the very spacious kitchen of a fine old family mansion, embowered in venerable oaks and elms of mighty growth, that the servants requiring a stout block for culinary purposes, had obtained it from the lower part of a stately tree, recently felled; and fixing its spreading base on the kitchen floor,—so they called it, though of flooring that quarter was perfectly destitute—they used it for several years, in the capacity aforesaid. Many a hard blow had the block sustained; many a time had its stubborn surface turned the edge of a hatchet and saw, sending the grumbling operator to the grindstone. Nobody doubted but the

block was destined to serve for some generations among those to whom its uses were various and important. The kitchen range did not appear more completely naturalized in its appointed station; nor, apparently, was the iron which composed it more effectually divorced from its parent mine, than was its neighbour, the heart of oak, from its brethren of the forest.

One fine moist spring, however, produced a singular effect on the block: several delicate young leaves were seen to sprout from its side. It was remarked as a curious circumstance by some of the servants, but the leaves soon being chipped off little notice was taken. The following year it exhibited more conspicuous tokens of vegetation: the shoots were many and of vigorous growth; while the servants agreed to preserve them, pleased to behold their ancient friend in so respectable a livery of national green. Towards autumn, its appearance became so striking, that the report was carried into the parlour; and the master of the family found on inspection so fine a development of root, striking deep into the soil of the kitchen, that for the sake of experiment he caused it to be very carefully dug up, without stripping those young roots; and placed in the natural ground, near an ancient avenue of its own kindred. He was not disappointed: for in a year or two the bushy honours of this kitchen block furnished one of the finest specimens of oak foliage to be found on the demesne.

I was in the neighbourhood at the time of this singular transplantation, and ridiculed very freely the idea of any other result than the speedy withering both of root and sprout: alleging that the atmospheric change from a culinary hothouse to the chill damps of closing autumn, with winter's succeeding blight, would alone suffice to extinguish the feeble essay of vegetation. But I wronged the noble plant: or rather the hardihood with which the Creator has endowed that majestic race of trees. It shamed my confident predictions, and became an ornament to the place.

Such a type has afforded me many pleasing illustrations, both on national and personal subjects; but one case is at this moment present to me, which follows it

out, I think, with peculiar truth. It regards the solitary survivor of a family that once flourished in the courts of the Lord: until, one by one, they were removed to a better country, and this youth remained, cut off from every external tie that had formerly united him to the people of God. Thrown among worldlings, he became altogether as they: he served their master, and he served them, in all the drudgery of sin. The world, the busy, noisy, abject world, became his element: in their daily toil he partook, and from the scenes of nightly revelry he was never absent. No more resemblance could be traced between H. and his departed relatives, than between the low and greasy block in a butcher's stall and the noble stem that throws the canopy of its verdant branches over a wide expanse of sheltered sod. The most sanguine of Christ's followers dared not to surmise of poor young H. that a principle of spiritual life existed within, lying dormant thus from year to year.

Yet so it was: I had the story from himself, that the first motions of that divine vegetation arose in his soul without the intervention of any other means than a vague and confused recollection of what he had heard in very early life. It was in the midst of as busy and bustling a throng as ever had congregated around him that these thoughts stole over his mind, gradually absorbing it to such an extent, that the forms which flitted past him were but as the shadows of clouds, and their merry or earnest voices as the murmur of running streams to the contemplative recluse. Hours had thus elapsed, ere he became sensible of their flight; and he hastened into retirement with feelings incomprehensible to himself, there to brood over the sweet and awful theme.

His experience was even from this moment a remarkably happy one: convictions he had, deep and powerful, of indwelling and of actual sin: but the manifestation of redeeming love was too vivid for the long continuance of any cloud. Fruits soon appeared, extraordinary enough in the sight of his ignorant companions, but passed over by them as the effect of momentary caprice. After a while, however, the Lord, who was thus mightily working in and for him, directed his removal, even in point of professional

avocations, from among the ungodly, and placed him in the midst of those who knew and feared His name. Until then, H. had made no open profession, and it was a matter of painful conjecture with his new associates, and of profane jests and foolish bets with the old, as to how he would appear in this situation. A very little time sufficed to delight the one party as much as the others were astonished and chagrined. If ever a young man boldly professed the name of Christ, and beautifully adorned his doctrine, such a man was H. Rooted and grounded in the faith, he stood, a tree of the Lord's planting, bearing fruit abundantly, that he might be glorified. I may speak freely of the departed, and H. is gone to his rest: I never beheld more vigorous growth than in him: or a richer adorning of those gifts and graces which the Lord alone can bestow.

Unquestionably there is a blessing connected with the steady observance of family religion, far greater and more extensive than our unbelief is willing to admit. I could fill a volume with the brief enumeration of instances coming within my own knowledge, and I do verily think that the Lord conceals from us many a work of grace in the souls of our dearest connexions, because of our slowness of heart to believe the immutability of His exceeding great and precious promises. It is very generally allowed that the miracles of healing performed on diseased bodies by the blessed Jesus were typical of what He is ever waiting to do for our sin-sick souls. We often find the leper, the blind Bartimeus, and the Syro-phenician woman, brought forward with striking commentaries, as furnishing invaluable encouragement to come, and be saved: but I think we are not equally willing to lay hold on the case of the man whose friends let him down through the roof—of the centurion so successfully pleading on behalf of his sick servant, and of the father who brought his poor possessed child to the Saviour immediately after His transfiguration. All these are told with such emphasis of application—why do we so overlook them? The last-named instance is peculiarly forcible: does not conscience tell us that we are very much in the habit of bringing our unconverted friends before

the Lord with an "If thou canst"? It is not that we doubt his power abstractedly: but I, for one, often detect myself meddling in matters too high for me, by putting forward at such times, the secret decrees of electing sovereignty; so that by musing whether such a soul be of the number of the elect, I have virtually put that treacherous "If thou canst" between me and my prayer. God, says this specious sort of unbelief, may have so bound himself by his own eternal decree, that this soul does not come within the number who shall be saved. Away with such daring perversion of a glorious truth! And oh, that we heeded more the impressive, the invaluable, the heart-strengthening reproof—"If *thou canst believe*:—all things are possible to him that believeth." And where, all the while was the subject of this momentous dialogue? Why, he "wallowed foaming:" in the very grasp, under the fiercest dominion of the devil.

"But this was a child." Be it so: *he* was no child to whom, when his friends brought him, and let him down in the midst before Jesus the Saviour "seeing *their* faith, said unto him, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Of course, no thinking Christian will suppose that I am verging to the popish doctrine of saintly mediation, based on the merits of the mediating saints, but this is the simple fact—God works by means; and your earnest believing prayers for your friend are as much an appointed means as any that you can name. In using those means, according to that appointment, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst," cries the leper, and the answer is sweetly given for every leprous soul that shall, to the end of time, come to the Healer—"I will." "If thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us," says the doubting father, interceding for his child: and in like manner comes the meet reply for every hesitating intercessor, "If thou canst believe: all things are possible to him that believeth." I may well be pardoned the repetition: we require to have these words hammered into us, until they extort the bitter, self-convicted cry, "Help thou mine unbelief!"

Doubting Christians! there is many a soul in glory, brought to its threshold

through the appointed means of your secret supplications, concerning which you are now in heaviness, because this word of the Lord not being mixed with faith in you, He could not do his mighty work openly. It is done, nevertheless; and if you would struggle for a little more belief, you would perchance see more, even now, of the glory of God, in reference to your buried brother. I am no theorist in this matter: I write what I do know.

The old oak-stump furnishes one of those trivial incidents of by-gone days on which faith can lay hold, and appropriate it. I sometimes see individuals placed in situations as unpromising as the dry block in the kitchen, or H. in a riotous party, concerning whom I am encouraged to ask, May not these, like Aaron's rod, be ordained to blossom and bud, and to be laid up in the heavenly sanctuary for a testimony? Then I am induced to pray accordingly; and perhaps I see the individual no more in this world, nor ever hear of him again: but such wayside prayers are not always lost. If we rightly considered who prompts every real supplication that ascends from the believer's heart, we should fear to question the issue: but there is evidently among us a great dread of believing too much, even of the love and faithfulness of our covenant God. Does this meet the eye of a wife whose soul is in heaviness because the beloved of her heart is paralytic—destitute of spiritual power? Of a mother weeping over her son, possessed of a devil,—internally deaf and dumb? Of a sister, who lies lamenting at Jesus' feet, because her dear brother is still sleeping in death, and bound in his grave clothes? Of a daughter, whose father is sick in the world's fever, and cannot wake from the region of its delirious dreams? Oh that I could show you Him who, ever living to make intercession, waits but till you vigorously lay hold on His own true word—"all things are possible to him that believeth"—to give you exceedingly abundantly above all that you ask or think. Paul was refused, when he petitioned to have the thorn in his own flesh removed; but in which of his glowing intercession for others do we trace the shadow of our own ifs and buts? It is most true that we are not of ourselves sufficient to think, or to ask any thing as of ourselves: but the

very fact of being drawn out to pray for those dear to us, is a token that a mightier power is working within: and we ought not to restrain it, or to check the filial petition with ignorant surmises as to what *may* be the will of God. "Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!" cried Abraham, when the full tide of divine promise was flowing towards Isaac. "And as for Ishmael I have heard thee," was the gracious reply. God has more blessings to bestow than we can muster claims to put in. Let us not impute niggardliness to Him who when He ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

CHAPTER X.

WILLIAM III.

By how trivial an event is the strong current of thought sometimes turned out of the smooth channel wherein it is peacefully flowing, into some other, through which it is compelled to hurry on, like a foaming torrent dashing its troubled waters against rock and stone, or murmuring through shades of darkness and dismay! This is my present case: I was preparing to think on paper, and think I cannot, just now, on any other topic than the one brought before me. A dear little lad, who well knows the habitual bent of my feelings, came to me in breathless haste to exhibit a prize that he had secured while making some purchase at a toy-shop—it was a farthing, displaying in high preservation the effigies of William and Mary; and on the reverse, the Irish harp: bearing date 1693. And this, thought I, as I gazed on the simple relic, this is the 13th of April, 1836, the seventh anniversary of that day when a king of the house of Hanover put his royal hand to the act of undoing what this humble coin commemorates! A day, indeed, this is to be remembered but not with joy: an event that showed the most undaunted warrior of the age yielding to intimidation, the most consummate statesman of his time egregiously outwitted, and a Protestant

king, with reluctant anguish of spirit, renouncing the very principles that placed his family on the British throne. Days that are past! what retrospect can I take, that will not fill me with shame and confusion of face on behalf of my besotted country—made drunk, indeed, as it was, with the wine of the wrath of that cup which the great harlot fills for the destruction of all who approach her!

I will not dwell upon the period itself, when with prayers and tears, and fastings, I besought the Lord, night and day, to avert from my loved country the guilt of this alliance with his anti-Christian foe. Conscience bears me witness, that in every possible way before God and man I recorded the solemn PROTEST which, though weighing but as a grain of sand in the mountainous bulk of divided opinions, was yet both a secret sigh and an open cry against the abomination that was done.* I will not recount my thoughts and feelings, when, on St. George's festival following, the name-day of the reigning king, the day when the fatal new law first came actively into operation, I found myself right opposite the royal standard of England, displayed in honour of the Sovereign, on the rampart of a great national military establishment, its gorgeous silken folds hanging listlessly down the flag-staff; and poor Erin's pictured harp actually resting on the ground. I stood and wept in the bitterness of national feeling; until a sudden breeze arose unfolding what was *once*

Our glorious semper eadem, the banner of our pride.

and as the magnificent breadth of that banner was flung to the playful winds, I turned away with one word only bursting from my lips—"Ichabod—Ichabod!"

But the effigies of William and Mary have sent me farther back, to the days of my sojourn in the great battle-field of Protestantism, Ireland. In the metropolis of that country there is one spot of rare, and, in the estimation of many, unparalleled architectural beauty. It is that where the spectator stands facing Carlisle Bridge, the Dublin University on his right hand; a little in advance to the left, that splendid structure over the Senate House, now the National Bank of Ireland, with its two fronts, the one looking on College Green,

* See *Essential* ix.

prayers on Sunday the 15th of May, 1836. Deep and rather strange was the emotion excited by this simple announcement, as the words of our Lord passed rapidly through the mind, "If the light within thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" And far removed from idle curiosity were the feelings with which I sallied forth, ere the shadow had well touched the verge of the sun's disc, to pass in a retired field the season of his obscuration.

The day was brilliant, and even oppressively warm. It breathed a fragrance and a balm that spoke of sunnier climes, and filled me with solemn thoughts of that miraculous eclipse which darkened Judea, when the orb averted his shining face from the awful spectacle of his Creator's agony. A keen conviction of my own exceeding sinfulness—of the part which my iniquities bore, in humbling my Saviour even to the death upon the cross, with somewhat of that appropriation which can say He "loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*," combined at once to sadden and to elevate, during a short progress to the chosen spot. It was gained, and in its verdant retirement I watched, not so much the sun as the earth, for, I confess, the spectacle so interesting to an astronomer's eye, attracted me less than the peculiar beauty of that dimness which even at its height left me a consciousness that, in spite of the eclipse, the sun was shining still—brilliantly shining—and retaining to himself a wide field of dazzling light upon the sky, though a cold dark blue in other quarters bore witness that a vast portion of his rays was withdrawn.

Insensibly, a vision of by-gone days arose before me: I could not fix the date, but at some period of happy childhood I had stood, in a fair garden planted on a gentle slope; at the bottom there ran a clear stream fringed with osier, willow, and hazel, which circled a common, until it reached the works of a mill, the object of my profound admiration, curiosity, and awe. The scene was restored, as by a magic touch; and I stood on the highest point of the garden ground, with my blooming little brother beside me, peering through pieces of smoked glass at the opaque object then darkening our summer day; and turning to admire, or rather to laugh at, the geese who, in solemn state,

were waddling across the common towards their place of nightly repose. I recalled the innocent prattle of my sweet companion, his bright countenance, lighted up by sunshine from within, and his anxious care, lest by any means I should lose any portion of the wonderful sight. "I think my glass is better than yours: take it, dear," was his occasional remark; and I dwelt upon his image, secretly exclaiming, Oh, where shall I now look for such sympathy, such love on this cold, dark, selfish earth! Dark indeed the earth was then waxing, in full unison with my feelings; and even the chill that accompanied the deepening gloom was congenial to that upon my spirits. The birds, flying low, in the direction of some sheltering trees and bushes, gave witness to their perception of the more than cloudy shadows that fell around, and, strange to say, I turned scarcely a glance towards the object of attraction, at that moment irresistible to many millions of eager gazers, but almost revelled in the gloom below.

From the by-gone days of individual feeling, a transition was soon made to what seems inwoven in my very existence—the by-gone season of my country's prosperity. This rousing theme withdrew me from the former retrospect, inducing a train of thought wherein many a one would freely participate who could not enter into the more selfish regrets. More than once has the sun of England's splendor suffered an eclipse, and the light that was within her been turned to the blackness of night; and blind indeed must they be who descry not the ominous speck, stealing as of old with noiseless but rapid progress over the glowing disc, prepared to quench its brilliancy, and to scatter around the darkness of the shadow of death. Only two days had elapsed since I learnt such facts, from indubitable authority, proclaimed too in the ears of many hundreds, as were calculated to fill with dismay every bosom not lulled into the torpor of self-deluding indifference. Among the encroachments recently made by the darkening powers of papal obscuration, I found upon the lowest calculation, which they themselves aver to be far below the real number, five hundred and ten chapels, erected for and dedicated to the idolatrous worship of Rome; with two other chapels,

lately in the occupation of Protestants, purchased from these degenerate successors of the Reformers, and converted into mass-houses too! Nine colleges for the regular instruction of our British youth in Maynooth morality, and the theology of Dens. Seven hundred ecclesiastics, all sworn and girded to the work of warring against our national faith.—A monastery in preparation, to harbour a hundred and forty monks of the dark and bigoted order of La Trappe, and, to spread the pollution yet wider and deeper, several infant schools, where the babes of England are taught to lisp the praises of the queen of heaven, and to bend the flexible knee, to lift the passive hand before a crucifix of wood—or a deity formed of potter's clay! I learnt that ample success had already crowned the proselyting zeal of these ministers of evil; that, through every gradation of rank, their false gospel had successfully run, winning souls from Christ and filling their coffers with unholy gain. I was told how they creep subtly in, obtaining the kingdom by flatteries: submitting some fair-faced plan of a school, founded, to be sure, on rules of unobjectionable liberality, where the rudiments of useful knowledge are to be afforded to the poor, apart from all interference with their religious tenets. Such benevolent prospectuses are offered to the notice of wealthy Protestants, with a modest petition for a little pecuniary help to carry them into effect: and the money thus abstracted from the pockets of their hoodwinked dupes, goes to garnish the mass-house, to salary the singing men and singing women, and in every way to lengthen the cords and strengthen the stakes of their extending encampment in the land.

Their missionaries, emboldened by success, now leave their lurking-places, delivering public lectures against Protestantism. A number of Magazines are attractively got up, and supported by the whole literary energy of the crafty, well-taught priesthood, to farther their views, by an extensive circulation among the upper and middle classes; while for the poor they are daily issuing a vast variety of cheap tracts, of most delusive tendency, and distributing them even at the doors of Protestant churches, to the departing congregation. Acute controversialists are

employed as scripture readers, to visit freely among the poor, to terrify them with the thunders, and to allure them with the blandishments of the apostate church. By these, and other means—by all deceptableness of unrighteousness directed by all the craft and subtily of the devil and man—is the wolf repairing his ancient den in the very bosom of our privileged fold. And are there none awake to the danger? none found to reject the hireling's part, and to follow the steps of the Good Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep? There is one society, established, and hitherto conducted, on the pure principle of scriptural watchfulness, and scriptural resistance to the enemy. A society which, totally unconnected with any party, and carefully keeping aloof from all political questions, treads in the steps of our martyred forefathers. Has apostate Rome her clerical missionaries zealously at work? The Reformation Society is augmenting its body of evangelical clergymen, and sending them forth to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Has Popery her Magazines, full of all subtlety and mischief, and her tracts drugged deep with poison for the poor? The Reformation Society furnishes a faithful exposure of the enemy's devices, and to the extent of its funds sends out a little army of tracts, full of the gospel antidote.

Scripture readers too have gone forth in Ireland, selected, commissioned, salaried by this society, who are there reaping a harvest of souls, from among the deluded people; and they lack but the power, not the will, to extend these efforts in England also. Yes, it is one grievous feature of the growing darkness, that a society which ought to enjoy the fervent prayers, the strenuous support of every true-hearted English Protestant, is suffered to struggle on, through difficulties of every shape, burdened with an old debt of thirteen hundred pounds, while as many thousands would be forthcoming from Protestant liberals, rather than the Popish priest, their polite neighbour, should want a spacious chapel, and a flourishing school. I cannot look upon the smiling heart's-ease, now putting forth its lovely petals on every side, to tell me of D., the honoured subject of many a fond regret, without

remembering how, from the day of this society's formation to that of his death, he laboured in it, and for it. A warmer advocate, a more strenuous supporter of its claims on spiritual men, the Reformation Society never had, than in D. Well do I remember his intense anxiety, at a period when no common difficulties involved it. In his own energetic style he remarked to me, "Its characteristic is honesty, based on godly principle. There is a cloud over it now, and the powers of hell are working for its overthrow: but never fear, dear friend; its banner is truth, and truth—God's truth—must and will prevail." I have known him speak even of its pecuniary embarrassments, as overruled to try for a time its faith and constancy; "And then," he smilingly added, "we shall be made to know whose is the silver, and whose the gold." Well might such recollections of D. mingle with the sad and solemn thoughts of a day, the very anniversary of that on which I, with several of his fellow labourers in the work, beheld his remains committed to the grave—well may they deepen my regrets, that hitherto his beloved Society has been lying, a perfect and powerful engine, waiting but the means to feed her furnace, and to career away on a long wide track of missionary usefulness, in the defensive warfare that we must ere long be aroused to maintain.

Our repositories of ancient Protestant literature furnish weapons of proof, the republication of which would go far towards turning the battle; but without assistance this cannot be done. An institution is also much wanted, in London, for the instruction of different classes of persons—a sort of depot, where young soldiers should be trained for the controversial encounter to which our clergy and laity are now frequently challenged by the well-disciplined forces of Rome. Can I behold, with augury of cheer, the rapid shading of our greatest light, and England lying in dreamy stillness, content that her eagles should droop the wing, and bow the head in dismay, while the owls and bats come screeching forth, to seek their destined prey in the gloom of such unnatural twilight? Yes, I can dare to hope: for eclipsed as our sun has frequently been, it has never been quenched. He who set it to rule the day, sustains it

yet; and still from the darkest depth of shade he will bid it come forth, as a bridegroom from his chamber—rejoicing as a strong man, to run its appointed race. Even so, vital protestantism, however sharp the conflict may be, will triumph over all; for what saith the Lord?—"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The candle that was lighted, by God's grace, at the flames of our martyrs, has never since been put out in England—it never will be.

While my thoughts were thus engaged, the eclipsing body began to pass away; the gladsome beam returned in its strength, diffusing light and heat, and joyousness around. The birds sprang forth from their covert, the shadows departed from the distant hills, and even the daisies at my feet looked up in gayer guise, to welcome the returning ray. Yet it was sad to think that on his own Sabbath the temples of our God had been closed, and one allotted season of public worship had passed unnoticed by. Too touchingly applicable was this part of the type:—men had forsaken the house of prayer to give their undivided attention to a speck of darkness, a blot on the page of creation, an interloper between themselves and the fount of day.

Commentators tell us that the moon, in prophetic symbols, typifies the church; and here we must needs concede the title to her of Rome. A church, not reflecting in pure and silver light the glories of the sun of Righteousness to illumine a benighted world, but thrusting her black and scowling aspect between that world and its redeeming God—intercepting the day-spring from on high in its mission of mercy to sinful man, and causing many steps to stumble, which that beam would have guided into the way of peace. A church whose prerogative it is, to shut up the temples of a pure worship, and attract all eyes to gaze on her own dark visage, when they should be searching the pages of inspired truth. Alas for our country, should such an eclipse be at hand; for however short, it is most terrible—fearfully dishonouring to God, and ruinous to the souls that he hath made. Many a record of by-gone days exists, though now too little heeded, from which we may gather the effects of that ancient visita-

tion, turning the sun into darkness and the moon into blood:—veiling the light of truth, by withdrawing holy scripture from men's eyes, and defiling the land with carnage—staining the church of Christ with the blood of his saints. The appeal made on this thrilling subject, at the recent meeting of the British Reformation Society, sank deep into the ears of some; may it have found entrance into their hearts, thence to be echoed through the corners of our land, and awaken a response worthy of those who, basking as they do in the gospel beam, can appreciate its grace and beauty; and resolve in the strength of the Lord, that His glory shall still dwell among us.

CHAPTER XII.

THE YEW-TREE.

If there be one scene more than any other calculated to leave a deep, enduring impression on the mind, and to be recalled with fondness, on occasions when scarcely any other reminiscence is welcome,—it is the scene of a village churchyard in some secluded spot, with its usual accompaniment of a venerable yew-tree. A succession of such pictures I can call up; for my path has lain through divers and distant places; and the landmarks that distinguish each, in these retrospective visions, are chiefly of that nature. Sorrow, in a variety of shapes, has accompanied my steps—a sad but sweet companion, rendered precious by the experience which assents to the wise man's remark, that "it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting." There has not been a time, since the earliest years of thoughtless youth, when enough of secret sorrow has not mingled with my brightest hours, to impart an attractive character to that house appointed for all living, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest."

One of these soothing scenes is even now vividly present to my thoughts. An antique church, with its square wooden turret, its short thick spire, and jutting

porch standing on the declivity of a gentle hill, closed in by trees towards the north, and southward opening down to a rich variety of meadows and corn-fields, marked out by hedge-rows, thick set with noble oaks, elms, and all the leafy denizens of a genuine English landscape. The whole aspect of that place was rural in a high degree; the few tombs that were scattered about lost their cold and formal character amid the luxuriance of the grass and wild flowers, which would not be restrained from shooting up, and tossing their graceful forms around them. The proportion of head-stones, though larger was still very moderate; and of these the greater number were of date so ancient as to be scarcely legible. Their grey moss-grown appearance, frequently half-sunk beneath the swelling turf, was exquisitely accordant with the venerable aspect of the old church. But the favourite species of memorial, (probably because it was more within the means of humble villagers,) consisted of a long board, placed low over the grave, and supported at either end by a wooden post. On one side of this rail was painted the name, age, and obituary of the dweller beneath its shadow: and on the other side sometimes a text of scripture, or an attempt at versification. These monuments were, of course, very frail, and not calculated to endure for many years. However, they served to mark the grave as long as, in the course of nature, the near connexions might be supposed to survive, whose feelings would be wounded by an invasion of the spot appropriated to their deceased friend. And this appears to me to be all that man can reasonably require at the hand of his fellow. Any attempt to evade the lawful decree, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," is equally vain and futile. It was not many days since I read of the public unrolling of an Egyptian mummy—an emphatic commentary upon the folly of such mistaken care of any poor mortal remains! The sanctity of the grave should be preserved inviolate—they who would invade it are monsters, not men—until sufficient time has been allowed for the perfect decomposition of what was committed to it: and then why preserve an external memento of a substance that has there ceased to

exist in its individual character? Why not bow to the penal fiat, and suffer the dust to mingle with its original? I like not to see the burial-ground so unfairly apportioned, as that the rich may fence off, from century to century, a spot where no spade can come: while the poor must be often tossed out of their graves, in visible and loathsome fragments, because of a senseless monopoly maintained by, perhaps, old coffins of many hundred years' date. This, however, is a passing remark.

However interesting in other respects the scene adverted to might be, there was one prime object of attraction to those who visited it: this was the ancient yew, which seemed to be coeval at least with the oldest of man's surrounding works. The tree was singularly fine: its trunk, of large circumference, was so completely hollowed out by age, that to one who entered the natural alcove thus formed, and calculated the thickness of the outer crust, it was matter of amazement how so slender a support could suffice for the enormous weight of branches that shot out above—or even convey adequate nourishment to those branches. Below, it was to all appearance, a blighted, broken, and crumbling ruin: above, a noble, vigorous, healthy tree, rich in renovated youth, and overshadowing a wide extent of humble graves. Indeed, the very poorest who could not afford even a wooden memorial of their loss, seemed to claim the ancient yew as a sort of natural protector—a monument planted by Him who careth for the poor, to cover their despised remains. I loved to draw the wild plants aside, and peruse the monumental inscriptions, enclosed within their veil: I loved to trace out the remote dates of those old grey head-stones, with their rude carvings of weeping cherubim: and I loved to ponder on the simple, often very touching lines, traced on decaying boards: but my chosen station was amid the cluster of nameless graves overshadowed by the patriarchal yew.

On two occasions I visited this spot, under circumstances never to be forgotten.

On the first sabbath after the falling of the heaviest blow that ever smote me, I repaired to that comparatively distant church to worship—to bow before the

mysterious hand that had rent away what was most precious to me. This could not be done in a place where I had before attended divine service: the wound was too recent, too agonizingly fresh, to admit of sitting beside *his* vacant seat, in the temple where we had so often worshipped together. The path to this retired churchyard lay through a corn-field. When last I had visited my favourite yew, that field presented a bare surface, excepting where a tender blade, more forward than its fellows, had here and there struggled through the soil, and looked abroad. On this sad sabbath my thoughts were so confused under their oppressive weight, that I forgot the lapse of time; and finding myself in a field of rich ripening wheat, I turned back, saying, "This is not the way." The little gate was silently pointed out to me, and I proceeded. Even at this hour I must again bless the Lord, for what He, who comforteth them that are cast down, then spoke to my heavy heart. It was not long since the seed of divine truth had been sown, by the preaching of the word to that beloved and lamented one: and in the absence of strong evidence (afterwards given) that it had indeed taken root, unbelief was striving desperately within; and asking, "Was there *time* for it to shoot forth?" Here was an answer so scripturally beautiful that I am never weary of dwelling on the type. As far as weeks and months were concerned, a much longer time had been allowed for the spiritual than the natural growth; and the passage was brought before me with a vividness impossible to describe. It was Jesus himself who had said, "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring, and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of itself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come." I might have read the passage a hundred times and not have caught its applicability: but here was the realization—here was the bright golden grain, drooping for very richness its mellow head before me, on the precise spot where

I had so lately seen only a cheerless expanse of dull grey soil. The wonders of creative power we make light of, through daily familiarity with their stupendous grandeur; but God does sometimes so reveal to the mourning soul the beautiful link which his own sweet parables have woven between them and the wonders of regenerating grace, that a voice comes, mighty alike in power and in love saying, "Be still and know that I am God." That voice calmed in a moment the tempest of my soul, and He gave me that day the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Blessed be his name! The dumb boy, whose tearful eyes watched every change of my countenance, immediately marked the alteration: he knew not how comfort had been given; but well did he know whence it came: and as we passed the churchyard gate, he made to me the short, but sweet and soothing remark, "Jesus Christ loves poor Mam."

The other particular visit was for a purpose scarcely less touching: in some points even more so. The hand of death was upon that boy; and his days were so evidently numbered, that another week seemed the utmost limit of his mortal existence. I left him under good care, and bent my way, beneath a cold, bleak wintry wind, to the churchyard, to fix on a spot for his mortal remains to rest in, beneath his favourite yew-tree. The design was afterwards abandoned, and another burial-place selected; but at the time I fully purposed to lay him there. How magnificent did the yew-tree look on that day! Midwinter had stripped every branch beside. Oaks and elms stood bare, with spreading arms, sturdily resisting the gale; and the tall naked poplar waved wildly before its breath. Heavy clouds were drifting, dark and low; while the long, meagre grass clogged with damp, and pressed downward by the sweeping wind, added to the desolate character of a scene that it was wont to embellish with softer loveliness. It was then that the fine outline of the ancient yew appeared in fuller, bolder relief against the sky. Slightly discomposed by the blast, its waving branches only displayed more openly the richness of their abundant foliage. It

stood, a green and flourishing thing, where all else was but wreck and deformity. How could I look upon this noble spread of unwithering branches from a poor, decayed, broken trunk, that seemed only fit for firewood, without recurring to the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," that God was preparing for my dying boy, out of the light afflictions" then working the destruction of his mortal frame, that his spirit might flee away and be at rest. There was a sublimity in that scene and hour, to which no effort of man's hand or head can attain. It was the grandeur of a new creation, rising from the emphatic wreck of all below it and around finding a congenial element in the very breath that blasted the fairest things of earth, and typifying what we are so slow of heart to believe—the persevering grace bestowed by the Giver of every good and perfect gift, on the souls that he has brought out from regions of sin and death. "Son of man, can these bones live?" was the question that made trial of Ezekiel's faith, when he looked round him on the dry and bleaching fragments of mortality, scattered in the valley. In like manner it might be asked can this aged, decayed trunk, scarcely retaining substance enough to support its upright position, shoot out the spreading bough, and toss the vigorous branch on high? Even so, likewise, is he who, convinced of the plague of the heart, finds that from the crown of his dead to the sole of the foot there is no sound part in him, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores, tempted to doubt, can God bring a clean thing out of what is essentially unclean? Can he make perfect his strength in weakness like mine? But the dry bones lived, and stood up, an exceeding great army, marching cheerily onward to Canaan. The shattered yew-tree—the wreck of unknown centuries—looked down in broad and flourishing vegetation, upon many a successive race crumbling among its roots: and the arm of the Lord, almighty to save, is never shortened, nor his power straitened towards the sinful children of men. No feebleness of body, no prostration of mind, can let him when he wills to work. However degenerate the vine of a strange

plant may be before him, he can graft it with a noble vine, wholly a right seed, and crown it with luxuriant fertility.

My last view of the stately old tree—for I never revisited the spot—filled me with such rejoicing thoughts; naturally leading to the glorious mystery of the body's resurrection from its sleep in the dust. Every grave before me was the visible portal of a mansion containing many chambers:—who could tell the number of the departed, within the confines of that ancient place of sepulture! Who could conceive the awful reality of the earth disclosing her dead, and each individual rising with his own body, to give account of the things done therein, during his sojourn here! There lay the worshipper of beings who could not save him: the poor victim of delusion, whose last cry was to some patron saint, and his strongest hope rested in the masses that should be offered for his deliverance from purgatory. There lay the formalist, whose barren orthodoxy might serve the purposes of self-deception to the verge of the grave, but could carry its fictitious aid no farther. The blasphemer was there, the drunkard, the extortioner, yea, the suicide, whose own hand shut fast the door of repentance against himself. And there, too, was the humble believer, who, counting all things but lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, won Christ, and will at the last day be found in him, having the righteousness which is by faith of Christ Jesus, and needing nought beside. At such a time and place, how inestimably precious does the gospel of salvation appear! Blessed be God, that gospel is now proclaimed in the antique village church, and its glad sound rustles through the branches of the venerable yew.

There is yet another touching reminiscence connected with the scenery, on which I love to dwell; but the particulars must be reserved for a future chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CADET.

LOVELY as is the family of flowers, there are times when their more stately brethren

of the forest advance an irresistible claim to preference. The burning rays of a sultry noon, reflected, as it were, from the highly tinted petals of blushing roses, golden lilies, and the countless varieties which emulate their glowing hues, are almost insupportable, unless some friendly shadow be cast from those patrons of the vegetable world. But who, at such oppressive season, can resist the charms of that wide-spreading foliage which is the pride of our English scenery? The flattest prospect is animated by it; the most dull, tame outlay of ploughed fields derives life and beauty from its intersecting hedges, if here and there a well-grown tree start up to break the level of their verdant lines. But when the towering monarch of the wood throws high and wide his bold arms, preserving around him a circlet of cool fresh green, where all beyond is parched; or when, from the ridges of hilly ground, dark files of these veteran guardians look down on some peaceful village, the antique little cottages of which have been crumbling away, while they rejoiced in augmenting strength, girding in, with unmoved fidelity, race after race of the sons of men; I think I could be content to pass the longest summer day unenlivened by the smile of a single flower, in meditating on the by-gone years, not merely of my own insignificant span, but of the generations that have appeared and vanished since those plants attained a growth entitling them to the name of trees.

Oh, how strongly do they plead against the thoughtless ingratitude of my people! They seem to say, "Peace has been within our borders, plenteousness within our palaces. No feller has come up against us; no ravaging hand has brought desolation within our rural reign. The Lord has been the defence of our country; the Lord is our lawgiver and our king, He has saved us. Ascribe unto the Lord the honour due unto his name." Thus, lifting their graceful heads on high, they seem to say; but feeble and cold is the response, if any be made to their appeal. Israel was commanded to preserve a special remembrance of her national deliverances—yea, the soul that neglected so to do, was to be cut off. Memorials were instituted, and pillars set up, that no Jew might look thereon without rendering

thanks and praise for the wonderful works that his fathers had so declared unto him. Their not keeping these great works in remembrance was an especial charge against them ; and can we stand guiltless before God, when we behold the monuments that tell of centuries past, through which we have experienced a succession of preservations, deliverances, privileges not to be paralleled in any other land, yet glory not God in our hearts, neither are thankful !

I have been led into this train of thought while rejoicing in the cool shade of some venerable trees that encircle a burying-ground whither I had wandered in the evening of a most sultry day. The surrounding scenery was stamped with character quite dissimilar from that of my distant village church-yard, as were its stately monuments from the lowly graves that swell beneath the antique yew. Nevertheless, the cord was struck ; there is a levelling feature in death that may be masked over, but it cannot be obliterated. Croly has finely expressed it :

To join the great equality :—
 All alike are humble there :
 The mighty grave
 Wraps lord and slave.
 Nor pride nor poverty dares come
 Within that refuge-house, the tomb.

Accordingly the transition was easy from the imposing display around me to the undulating lines of that soft, modest sod, where I once proposed that the clay of my "Happy Mute" should repose until the resurrection morning. And from thence to a more distant spot by me unvisited, where rest the mortal remains of one whose light step loved to accompany me to my favourite yew-tree, and whose active hands often secured some little branch, of fan-like elegance, to ornament my mantel-piece as long as the freshness of its deep green should survive. He was one whom I had before caressed, as a little prattling child, in regions yet farther removed ; and when I again saw him, after the lapse of some ten years, a well-grown youth attired in the showy uniform of his intended profession, the preparatory studies for which he, among many others, was pursuing, I could not detect a change in the character of his well-remembered face. The blue eyes laughed as innocently out, and the flaxen curls as carelessly

played on his open brow ; while the dimple retained its individualizing stamp ; never failing to deepen with undisguised pleasure at the sight of one whom he loved "with all the veins" of his unsophisticated heart. Guileless he was indeed, and harmless in a degree very unusual among the fierce and forward spirits of that privileged corps—privileged in a sense more gratifying to the carnal heart than conducive to spiritual welfare.

But Robert was one not easily to be spoiled : the child of many prayers, I traced in his character the pledge that an answer of peace was being already sent to the secret supplications that daily ascended from the heart of a widowed mother, who sought for her boy better things than the world can give, and who, in placing him where I found him, acted not from choice. Although Robert made no open profession—a thing scarcely possible in his then situation—yet when I marked the genuine humility of his spirit, the docile, patient, loving temper that distinguished him, the meekness of wisdom wherewith he avoided any participation in the misdoings of others, and the respect with which he evidently though unconsciously inspired not only his giddy comrades but the leading men of the institution, I could not but mentally exclaim, "Surely the grace of God is here !" I once asked a teacher, whose righteous soul was vexed from day to day by deeds that he could not prevent, what was his opinion of young Robert C. His reply was given with energetic brevity and feeling,—“He is a lamb.” Yet Robert, though it was pretty well understood that he would not fight, was never insulted ; a passing joke he could take with admirable grace, and often by a sportive reply, turn the laugh against its originator : when an act of real aggression seemed in view, he calmly and gravely said, “Gentlemen, this is a breach of discipline ; and if you persist, I must report it.” By these means, as he himself told me, he led a quiet life, though not he owned, altogether a happy one : looking forward to entering on a profession from which his mind involuntarily shrunk—surely through the growing operation of that Spirit whose fruits of “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness,” cannot desire to be fed by the blood of wretched

men, butchered in unnatural warfare. He once asked me, "How is it that I, a soldier's son, brought up in a garrison, and passing my whole time in military studies, should care so little for what all my comrades are mad about—a commission?" "Dear Robert, I hope you will never be a soldier; and I think the Lord has some other path open for you." "Oh, don't encourage my dislike to it: I *must* be a soldier; and if ever you tell my dear mother that my feelings are against it, I shall lock up all my thoughts from you."

Yet the boy was courageous beyond many who gloried in their bravery. He one day brought me a pretty purse, formed of coloured ribbons, saying, "I netted this myself for you: will you take it?" I told him I wondered at his ingenuity, but much more how he could steal time and privacy to accomplish such a piece of work. "Why," said he, opening his eyes very wide, "I netted it in the guard room." "And what did your comrades say? they must have bantered you terribly." "They tried to do so; but when I told them they would be glad of as kind a friend as you are to me, and that they only envied alike my privileges and my skill, they left off." It was the remark of one who had served through many a hard campaign and who delighted in Robert, that it required more courage to do this than to fight a dozen battles. Robert's purse is stored among the dearest of my relics.

I bless God, that while indulging the dear boy's wish to pass in quiet walks with me and my little party the hours that others devoted to very different pursuits, I did not neglect the one thing needful, but spoke often to him on the concerns of his soul. His grave, sweet looks gave encouragement, though I never could draw from him a word expressive of the effect produced: and his increasing fondness for society that would have become most irksome had the subject been unwelcome, gave a stronger testimony that his heart went beyond his lips. It was his delight to ramble about the village church-yard with me; and to hunt with Jack for sham-rocks among the grass. He was not a whit less national than the dumb boy; and the only flash of anger that I detected in him was one of passionate wrath, on hearing a reflection cast on his country by

some prejudiced person. I calmed him, by taking up the subject in my own way: nor could I tell whether the tears that immediately swelled in his eyes were those of indignation, or of gladness at hearing the calumniator of poor Ireland effectually silenced.

The yew-tree, with its venerable trunk dilapidated by the hand of time, and its vigorous shoots of new and glorious vegetation, stands before me now, so vividly drawn out, that I wonder at the perfect picture, after such a lapse of years. Just as distinct is the light figure of the young cadet, standing at full stretch, on tiptoe, perseveringly resolved to bring down, with the handle of a parasol, an elegant little tuft of newly-expanded foliage; while Jack with vehement gesticulation, tried to dissuade him from endangering "Mam's pet umbrella," and to cut a hooked stick from the hedge. A simple group—but how touching, when I reflect, that while the aged tree stands unmoved and unchanged, the agile forms of those dear youths are mouldering in graves far far apart from me and from each other; and their spirits together rejoicing before the throne of the Lamb, while I am left to weep over the recollection of the warm love that their young hearts bore me, and the pleasant smiles with which they gladdened many a sorrowful hour in the very darkest season of my earthly pilgrimage. It was at that season when I was yet unconscious of the fearful blast that had fallen on my pleasant gourd, and withered it away,—it was then, that the mother and sisters of Robert overwhelmed me with such a debt of love and gratitude as none may compute but He who is pledged to repay it a thousand fold into their own kind bosoms. It was a strange dispensation that, some years after, when all had been arranged to their heart's content for their Robert's settlement in a peaceful and useful walk of life, took him away with a stroke almost as sudden as the one that overwhelmed me; before even the rapid steps of love could reach his dying pillow. But all was well: his gentle spirit returned to the God who gave it, not without leaving a sweet record of simple living faith in the all-sufficient Saviour of sinners.

In dreams and visions of the night, I sometimes find myself beneath the aged

yew-tree, holding converse with those who will no more gladden my sight until, in glorified bodies, they arise from the dust. I cannot but feel a beauty in the dispensation so grievous to flesh, so painful and humbling to man. If each lived out the full term of years allotted to mortality,—if the young and the strong were never cut off from among us, the aged only borne away, coming to the grave like shocks of corn fully ripe—we should lose a powerful and a precious link, ill spared, between our dust-loving souls and the regions of immortality. It is when some youthful companion is snatched from the endeared circle and wasted aloft beyond our ken, that we learn to look, as it were, into the heights and depths of invisibility, and to realize what of all things we are least disposed to realize. I visit some well-known spot, where all is, perhaps, as it was ten or twenty years ago: my thoughts cannot but revert to the time, and to the individuals then surrounding me. Some of those—oh, how often the dearest and the brightest of all!—are gone, passed altogether away from sublunary scenes: but from my heart they cannot pass away: and knowing that they still exist, how can I but follow them, in tender thought, to their mysterious abode, rendered more than half a home to me by becoming the dwelling-place of those so dear. It is true that all reminiscences of the departed are not thus sweet. Over some, an awful darkness hangs; for I know not that they were Christ's, and therefore I dare not follow their track beyond the confines of this material world. Yet, such is the merciful dispensation of divine grace, that I think the mind of the believer is generally, after a short and bitter struggle, enabled to acquiesce in so leaving them until the day of the revelation of all things. The heart that is savingly united to Jesus is enabled to divorce all that has finally rejected him, though not without a pang of lingering fondness, that would be insupportable if permitted long to abide. It, however, gives place to the vivid, the cherished feeling which clings to the memory of the blessed—the dead who have died in the Lord—the souls that have flown as the doves to their windows, and nestled in the bosom of redeeming love.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SCHOOL.

"THE chain of events" is an expression familiar to almost every one; it is often employed by those who deny the especial hand of divine providence in ordering the affairs of men. If I showed one of these persons a material chain, assuring him that the links of iron, silver, or gold, were indebted to no fashioning tool, but shaped themselves, and casually fell into that connected form as they issued from the mine, he would rightly think me a fool, or conclude that I considered him as one. Yet, "good fortune," "bad fortune," "lucky coincidences," "evil chances," and such like, are heads under which he would coolly arrange any series of perfect links that I could point out, in the course of an eventful life. Nay, he would smile at my fanaticism, if I ventured to suggest that in a work so beautifully adapted to an ultimate end, the hand of a governing power was perceptible in every stage.

What a dark and formless chaos must any human mind present, where the spirit of God has not moved, nor the voice of Omnipotence proclaimed "Let there be light!" Comparing his own crooked and perplexed course with that of some acquaintance who, acknowledging God in all his ways, has found the promise sure that he would direct his paths, the unbelieving soul repines at its own "ill fortune," and marvels, if it do not murmur, at the "good luck" attending another's prayerful undertakings. Let but the day-beam find admittance, and how changed will be the scene! Past events will assume a new character, each will be found to have formed a link, exquisitely fitted and adjusted by divine skill: and the hand so long unseen, so tardily acknowledged, will be recognized as still shaping the succeeding portions, or rather unfolding what had long been fashioned secretly, until the last bright circlet is found to rest on his eternal throne.

We may adopt Archbishop Leighton's beautiful illustration of a chain, which he describes as having its first and last links—election and final salvation—"up in heaven, in God's own hand;" the middle

one, which he says is effectual calling, being "let down to earth, into the hearts of his children; and they laying hold on it, have sure hold on the other two, for no power can sever them." Then, the events that lead to that calling, and those who follow it, even to the final consummation and bliss of God's people in heaven, may be considered as so many connected and connecting links, not one of which but bears evidence of the Master's hand. How often does Satan exert all the skill of his infernal mechanism to hammer out an additional fetter for his blind and hopeless captive, already fast bound in misery and iron, which is laid hold on by the divine Alchemist, and changed into a golden link in the wondrous chain of providential mercies, destined to form the subject of an everlasting song of praise in the mouth of that ransomed sinner! Events that wrung my heart with piercing anguish, and of which I could not but say they were the strokes of an enemy, I am enabled to look back upon, with so deep a sense of their value and importance, that although I may not dare to say the work could not have been perfect without them, yet I do thankfully acknowledge them among the richest mercies. I can say it of every dispensation towards me, that God has wrought it into a link in that precious chain: and sweet indeed is the retrospect of by-gone days, when thus enlightened by the means of covenant mercy.

My dumb boy once told me, very abruptly, that he had been thanking God for making him deaf and dumb when he was very little. On my inquiring why, he chuckled, and expressed, in his simple way, a great deal of exultation, repeating that it was "very good." At length he told me, not without a hint that he pitied my "doll-head" for failing to discover any thing so obvious, that having been taken regularly to mass, by his poor parents, he should, if he had been like other children, have committed the great sin of idolatry. However, he said, not being able to hear, he could only be made to kneel, cross himself, and hold up his hand towards the crucifix and images. When I inquired if he did not pray at all, at such times, with his heart, he repeated the word "pray" with a laugh, assuring me that he never

had felt the smallest respect for the objects before him: that he saw they were stone, wood, or paper, and as such regarded them. He added, that he had no idea what praying was, until he beheld us, at family worship, look up, and speak with so much reverence and love (describing it) to One whom we could not see. Then with lively joy, he repeated, "God is good—very good, God made little John deaf." So great was his exultation in this thought, when only twelve years old, that he would laugh and jump, because, as he told me, it made the devil cry. I gained an interesting lesson; and following his example, endeavoured to number up the blessings contained in what the world would call my numerous misfortunes. It certainly showed me many beautiful links in the great chain of providential mercies, never before recognized as such.

Among the ties that bound me to a particular spot, one was pre-eminently strong and pure. Often do I recall it with fond regret, and dearly do I love to dwell on its remembered features. The circumstance was this:—The gospel having been totally withdrawn, or rather unjustifiably thrust out from the pulpit of my stated place of worship, and the message of reconciliation through the blood of the cross silenced all around us, I was induced to admit a few humble but pious neighbours, on the sabbath evenings of a long winter, to join with my family in the church service, and to hear a sermon read from old Flavel, or some other of that awakening school. Several children attended: and as they occupied too much room in my little cottage parlour, and were withal somewhat restless, I told them they must stay away in future: adding, that if any of them really desired to hear and pray, I would devote an hour in the earliest part of the Sunday afternoon to them. Good Friday following next after, half-a-dozen pretty little girls, leading two tiny boys, walked up to my door at four o'clock—I had stipulated for their previously attending church—and the spokeswoman, dropping a curtesy to the maid who opened it, said, "Please ma'am, to-day is like Sunday; and may we have a chapel to-day?"

I was from home, visiting a sick person, and on my return was rather startled to

find how resolved my little neighbours were to establish their claim on "a chapel." I set myself to prepare for it on Easter day, when more than a dozen assembled, to whom I read, and familiarly explained, a chapter, asked a few questions, offered a short prayer with them, and instead of a sermon, treated them with Cennick's "Letter to little Children." My congregation was certainly not very orderly: I had to pass an oblique censure on most of them, by commending one for steadiness and attention. But I was not disheartened; and the next Sunday brought me near twenty. From that time a task was commenced to which the Lord enabled me to devote myself for more than a year, sacrificing to it every other work. I had so full a party of these dear children weekly assembling that the largest room in my cottage would not contain more than half of them. I therefore divided them, having the girls first, from four to half-past five, and as soon as they were gone, the boys. It was a singular scene! They belonged to the families of small trades-people, and the many individuals connected with a very large national establishment, hard by. Every one of them could read well, and our plan was remodelled to suit the demand of so large a number—above sixty—on the attention of one poor unassisted female.

A long table, or rather several tables, being placed across the room from corner to corner, to afford the greatest possible length, and covered with a green cloth, benches, stools, and chairs were set round it to the best advantage, with a reserve of bibles for the very few who possessed none. The party being admitted and properly ranged, an introductory prayer was offered up, a hymn sung, and then a chapter given out, to be read verse by verse, each young person being questioned on it; and all that the teacher could communicate, in the way of illustration, inference, and application, most freely imparted. At the close, another hymn was sung, and a short thanksgiving concluded all. The sight was lovely, when the girls, in their neat Sunday frocks and caps, or ringlets (for bonnets were laid aside) sat round this cheerful board, at a feast such as this world's princes could not spread. They were quiet, modest, intel-

ligent, and apt to learn. On departing, each received the gift of a tract; and time enough only for a hasty cup of coffee to be swallowed was suffered to elapse before the signal was given, and in rushed the boys.

It is impossible to describe the wild eagerness of delight with which those sprightly boys would overleap the benches and secure each his assigned place. It required some determination to keep their spirits within due bounds, so inexpressibly dear to them was the work. Eight o'clock was the appointed hour for separating; but often have they coaxed their happy teacher for leave to sing "just one hymn more," until the bell tolled nine. Many of them had fine voices, and were taught to accompany a splendid band in the church: their singing, therefore, spontaneous as it was, and with feelings, if not hearts, attuned to the occasion, was often exceedingly fine. Many a passer-by has crept in at the little gate, crossed the small garden, and laid his head among the roses that profusely covered the cottage wall, to listen while twenty or thirty clear young voices, led by a child of singular talent, breathed out some of our finest specimens of devotional melody.

Commendations, rebukes, and tracts being suitably dealt out, away bustled the little congregation; and the Lord only knows how my spirit has been elated, while, from bodily exhaustion, I could scarcely walk across the room. Sometimes D. would come down on the Saturday night, and take the whole work into his hands, rejoicing in it, even as the boys did to receive his teaching: and there are some of those precious children now in heaven with him, singing a sweeter song than those in which they so loved to join below. Others there are, yet on earth, who will recognize in this faint outline the features of a scene most lovely in their eyes, and precious to their hearts. They will remember the little parlour, the long table, the wide rustic window, the clustering roses without, and the glowing countenances within. Let them breathe once more our oft-repeated prayer; that the seed there sown may yield a rich and abundant increase!

It was one of the severest of my trials to quit that simple cottage, to break up

my darling school, and to leave those lambs in the wilderness. I recollect with what rebellious struggles my will at length submitted. I remember the last Sunday when, every piece of furniture being removed, and the house shut up, we opened it again for the sole purpose of once more enjoying our cherished privilege. It was a gloomy season, though summer smiled brightly upon us. The beautiful rose-tree which covered the cottage walls, and even ran over its roof, had suddenly withered, nobody knew why or how: but the garden was full of flowers, every one of which the dear children plucked and brought to me, with many tears and sobs, before they left it. It seemed a dispensation of almost unmixed severity to divorce me from that spot, endeared by many a recollection of those who never, never could revisit it again, and sanctified by a work so sweet, so holy. There had the dumb boy ripened for heaven; and thence had his happy spirit taken its flight. My Sunday pupils delighted in Jack, whose vigilant oversight of them, and inexorable firmness in reporting every case of misbehaviour, often tempted the merry boys to transgress, for the purpose of provoking his displeasure. And very touching it was to see the whole of them, with not a few of the girls attired in their best, and formed in procession, following on foot the carriage which bore the dumb boy's remains to their final resting-place. A four mile walk through melting snow, under a drizzling rain, on a comfortless day, was no slight proof of their grateful affection for one whose sorrow they strove thus to soothe; and none who witnessed Jack's funeral will ever forget the moment when those boys drew close around the open grave, and sung over the coffin their favourite hymn—

“Lo! he comes, with clouds descending.”

Dear children! my rebellion almost revives when I think of the bitterness of spirit with which I forsook them: yet it was a link, a bright link in my golden chain, for that reluctant movement brought me into a more important field, among the victims of popish delusion, to see some brands plucked from that terrific burning, when even on the verge of eternal flames. It was a strange transition, and most ungenial; but I am bound to render

praises unto God for it. Neither was the former work unowned or unblessed: some instances occurred, which I may perhaps relate at another time; proving that the Lord was among us, in the Sabbath-school—or rather Bible-class, for there was no teaching, except from the word of God. I am deeply persuaded that a few hours thus devoted, by those who have no lack of means or opportunity to labour among the children of their humbler though respectable neighbours, would bring in a vast increase of mutual benefit, would bind in an endearing tie the different classes of society, and tend to glorify God by serving him in the gospel of his Son.

CHAPTER XV.

EDWARD.

AUTUMN is peculiarly a season of retrospection. Custom has taught us to close our year in mid-winter; our natural feeling would suggest a different computation—would select the falling leaf, and failing sunbeam, as the appointed memento of man's frailty; and warn him, as he looks upon the rapidly changing scene, to make up his accounts with time, to set his house in order, and with redoubled diligence to work while day-light remains, seeing how rapidly the night approaches when he can work no longer.

Mutation is the universal law in this changed and fallen world. Countries indeed there are, exempt from the dreary visitation of winter, skies ever bright, and flowers ever blooming: but in these the rending hurricane, the dreaded simoon, the frequent earthquake, the volcanic eruption, and the desolating pestilence, give more terrible note of that prevailing law than in our beautifully instructive clime, where the voice of admonition speaks to the conscious heart,

“Behold, fond man,

See here thy pictured life: pass some few years,
Thy flowry spring, thy summer's ardent strength
The sober autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding winter comes at last
And shuts the scene.”

I would not barter my country's mutable skies and ever-varying landscapes for those of any other land. I would not exchange this towering oak, that having put forth his tardy leaves the last of our forest trees, is even now preparing to shed them with his ripening acorns on the humid soil—no, I would not exchange the king of English vegetation for a whole grove of fat olives, or fragrant orange-trees, whose silver blossoms and golden fruit together laugh to scorn the very name of winter.

Such were my thoughts while strolling leisurely along, in a place where it is hard to say whether the eye or the mind may feast most luxuriously, providing the heart be not dead to that invigorating principle, Christian patriotism. Over my head waved the growth of many generations; magnificent cheenuts, with here and there a native oak, which "wreathed its old fantastic roots so high" as to afford a commodious seat, whence I might look downwards, and trace the windings of the mighty Thames, as he bore, on a full tide, the ships of many nations forth to ocean. Oh what an inexhaustible treasury of by-gone days is stored in the flowing waters of old father Thames! Cold reason whispers it is all an illusion: those waters rippling past are as new to the scene as yonder bark, evidently fresh launched. They come from springs afar, in little streams running among the hills, swelled by junction into yonder large body, and hastening away for their first plunge into the boundless main. By what stretch of imagination can you identify these young waters with the scenes and doings of remote ages? It is all very true, and somewhat annoying just now: but mutation is the subject of my present thoughts; and to adduce our ancient river as a striking example of that law does not so much discompose me as at another time it might. However, though Thames were dried up, and the very trace of his channel obliterated, there is that around me to compensate for such a loss. My eye rests on the spot whence a spirit was borne away by the angels of God unto the bosom of eternal love—the spirit of one who sojourned here but for a little while, to bequeath at its departure a blessing, long afterwards nursed in tears and blood, and burning flames, but now deeply rooted, widely

spreading, and crowning the land with peace. It was there the sweet, the gentle, the saintly young Edward breathed his soul into his Saviour's hands, and laid aside an earthly diadem for that crown of righteousness which Christ has laid up for them who love his appearing—there he relinquished the broad realm of troubled England to enter upon an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for him, who was kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. Our language contains few things more touchingly beautiful than the testimony of old John Foxe, our illustrious Martyrologist, to the excellency of this young king. He lingers on the theme with the zest of a traveller, who, after labouring for many a long league through a howling wilderness, full of serpents and ravening beasts, and great drought, comes at length to a soft, sheltered valley, where gurgles a pure spring, overhung with fair trees, from whose branches depend many a cluster of ripened fruit. There he rests and ponders, and rejoices with saddened joy; for the valley is short, and his farther track lies through scenes more dreadful than he has yet encountered. Thus does Foxe expatiate, in the midst of his painful travel through ages of persecution, on the bright oasis of young Edward's transient reign: and cold must be the English heart that does not reciprocate his feelings! On the same spot where Edward died, Elizabeth had first seen the light; and before her the fierce firebrand of God's wrath—the dark and cruel bigot Mary—had there entered the world. One passage from the graphic pen of Foxe is vividly present to me, when I wander in these shades, and tearfully ask, Where has the mantle fallen of that blessed young saint, whom no eloquence could move, no plea of expediency prevail with, where the faith of Christ as opposed to the abomination of popery was concerned? I will quote the anecdote in the very words of our faithful Historiographer.

"In the days of this king, Edward VI, Carolus, the Emperor, made request to the king and his council to permit lady Mary (who after succeeded in the crown) to have mass said in her house without prejudice of the law. And the council on a time sitting upon matters of policy, hav-

ing that in question, sent Cranmer, then archbishop of Canterbury, and Ridley, then bishop of London, to entreat the king for the same. Who coming to his grace, alleged their reasons and persuasions for the accomplishing thereof. So the king, hearing what they could say, replied his answer again out of the Scriptures, so groundedly, gravely, and full, that they were forced to give place to his replication, and grant the same to be true. Then they, after long debating in this manner with his majesty, laboured politiciely in another sort, and alleged what dangers the denying thereof might bring to his grace, what breach of amity of the emperor's part, what troubles, what unkindness, and what occasions sundry ways it would enforce, &c. Unto whom the king answered, willing them to content themselves, for he would, he said, spend his life and all he had rather than to agree and grant to that he knew certainly to be against the Truth. The which when the bishops heard, notwithstanding they urged him still to grant, and would by no means have his Nay: then the good king, seeing their importunate suits, that needs they would have his majesty to consent thereto, in the end his tender heart bursting out into bitter weeping and sobbing, he desired them to be content. Whereat the bishops themselves seeing the king's zeal and constancy, wept as fast as he, and took their leave of his grace; and coming from him the archbishop took master Cheke, his schoolmaster by the hand, and said, Ah, master Cheke, you may be glad all the days of your life that you have such a scholar: for he hath more divinity in his little finger than all we have in all our bodies. Thus the lady Mary's mass for that time was stayed."

Oh glorious By-gone days of my dear country, when a stripling king could confound with the pure word of God, the wisdom of two mitred heads: could silence every pleading of crooked expediency, by boldly avowing his willingness to suffer the loss of all temporal things, yea of life itself, rather than swerve from the straight path; and finally, with his tears, prevail to avert the abomination that he was solicited to connive at! Who can tell how deep the words and tears of their youthful prince sunk into the hearts of the two pre-

lates, both of whom died at the stake, under the bloody rule of that same Lady Mary. We cannot forget that at Ridley's burning the candle was lighted in England, which, by God's grace, has never yet been put out; and can we doubt but that the recollection of this interview did many a time both humble and cheer the spirit of the venerable martyr, during his long imprisonment, and many persecutions for Christ's sake? Give me but this English oak, the pages of old Fox and the locality sacred to young Edward, and I care not how rudely the autumnal breezes may whistle around, or how many leaves, falling at my feet, may give warning that the pleasant scene of my summer stroll must soon be rendered untenable by the snows and storms of winter. Many a tempest has howled around, and shaken my oak, and by so doing has rooted it more firmly: many a hurricane, more wild than they, has rocked my country's church to its foundation, and with the same effect—for that foundation standeth sure, and the house falls not, because those who built it digged deep, and used a cement which God, not man, provided. Many a hostile navy has threatened to thread the mazes of that noble river, and bear destruction to the lofty towers of London: but since the pure faith of the gospel supplanted the false religion of Rome, no enemy has approached our city: it has been a quiet habitation. There the glorious Lord hath been unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein hath gone no hostile galley with oars, neither hath gallant ship passed thereby. For the Lord hath been our Judge, the Lord has been our law-giver, the Lord hath been our king: he hath saved us.

Thus, dwelling on the past, I rejoice in the present; and for the future—may the Lord enable me to hope! Our Israel has ere now destroyed herself, beyond the power of man to succour, yet has found her help in God, whose mercies fail not. Instead of lingering on the painful theme of our national defalcation, let me praise the Lord for the precious fruits of his preached and planted gospel in this realm, acknowledging the blessed contrast. Time was, when to possess a copy of that word in which is spiritual life, subjected the individual to bodily death; but now it can

run, and is glorified in the remotest corners of our village retreats, no less than in crowded congregations of the rich metropolis. I can sit under my oak tree; and by a long but evident succession of bright links, I can connect with the enduring constancy of young Edward the peaceful assemblage of that Sabbath school alluded to in a former chapter.

Through the abundance of spiritual instruction afforded by means of an unshackled press, I was enabled on each returning Sunday to present to every individual girl and boy a religious tract. Many questioned the propriety of giving them unreservedly, and suggested that a loan would be more beneficial. But the Lord had put it into my heart to give: and in several cases there was much cause for rejoicing that I had so done.

One was that of a poor, aged, bed-ridden woman, of whom I knew nothing, but whose little grandson was a volunteer in my school. He punctually carried to her his tract, and she had them all stored in a drawer by her bed-side. The neighbours who casually came in to make kind enquiries, or to sit awhile with her, were always requested to open this drawer, and to take out such tract as she, probably with a reference to their several characters and circumstances, should describe, and read it to her. She was a spiritual person, one of the Lord's poor; and I had grounds for more than a surmise that the hoard was thus made extensively useful.

The other instance was more touching. I was told that a young woman, a perfect stranger to me, residing in a very retired spot three miles from my abode, was dying of decline; and that having been converted by a tract belonging to one of my girls, she was also in great joy and peace. This tract, I was assured, she would peruse till her eyes failed, and then employ her mother and her neighbours to read it to her for hours. My curiosity was excited to know what tract it could be that would furnish so much employment to readers: for I had given none containing more than a few pages. At length I walked over to Y—— Common, where the young woman resided, and found her indeed in a dying state, and not less happy than I had been led to expect. Inquiring what had been the means of leading her

thus to the cross of Christ—for she had been at service in a very worldly family until declining health compelled her to return home, and well I knew that all around her cottage was a spiritual desert—the reply was given with a joyous smile, “It was Mary N——’s tract.” I requested to see this tract: and greatly was I affected when the mother handed to me the dark leather binding of an old-fashioned volume, within which Mary N—— had neatly stitched every tract that she had received at the school—above fifty—ending with the one which I had given her on the preceding Sabbath. This was the inexhaustible “Tract” by means whereof Mary W—— had been led to the Bible, and where she had found many a sweet commentary on the inspired word. She was in a most happy, resigned state, resting on Christ alone, and rejoicing in the growing attachment of her family to the truths of which all had alike been totally ignorant. It was an interview and an incident never to be forgotten. It embodied that precept long dear to me—“In the morning sow thy seed, and at evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that, or whether both shall be alike good.” Mary W—— I saw no more; she soon after departed in peace; but D—— who took the liveliest interest in my school, presented Mary N—— with a beautiful edition of Legh Richmond’s “Annals of the Poor;” “Little Jane” having been especially blessed to her friend—and the whole occurrence, I think, produced a very beneficial effect on the minds of the children.

Among the girls was one who not only attended the school, but dwelt as a domestic under the roof. She had, from early childhood, given evidence of a gracious work within, and at the age of sixteen she was called away. Strong convictions of her own unprofitableness, bitter regrets for not having more consistently and openly glorified Christ, with a lively impression of the majesty and purity of him with whom she had to do, produced a degree of despondency, that made her death-bed sometimes a trying scene. She could not realize her personal interest in Christ, or his presence with her, and was exceedingly cast down. This continued but for a time; giving place to a very clear ap-

prehension of all that the Lord had done for her, and much gladness of heart ensued. She was, however, of so quiet and simple a character that nothing appeared in her manner or language savouring of excitement. She was very calm, and always humble. This gave peculiar effect to the closing scene, which I narrate just as it occurred.

Sally had lingered long; and though wasted to a mere shadow, no indication appeared of immediate dissolution. An elder sister had been watching beside her one morning, and seeing her in a very sound peaceful sleep, she softly arose, to pay some attention to a younger girl, who was indisposed in the same room. She had not stepped four paces from the bedside, when she heard Sally, in a voice of the most sudden and eager joy, and so loud as to be heard by all in the cottage, exclaim, "Ann, Ann, the Lord Jesus is come for me!" Ann sprang back instantly, but Sally was gone. She had just started from her quiet slumber, turned her face up from the pillow, and with that cry of wonder and delight—for the tone and the lifeless countenance vividly expressed both—she had departed to be ever with the Lord.

And these results, with many many more, sprang from a single proclamation of the love and power of Jesus! These are the blessings that flow from an unfettered bible, and a preached gospel. To secure this, young Edward wept and prayed, and, in a strength derived from above, resisted even the TOLERATION of that deadly foe to Christ and his truth, "the Lady Mary's mass." This venerable oak, on whose gnarled and struggling roots I recline in thankful meditation, may have witnessed the secret prayer, and sheltered the meek head of that twice-anointed child of God. It bears the marks of venerable and decaying age; and what are three centuries in the growth of an English oak? In an antique painting of the palace, as it then stood, I mark an avenue of young trees, in the exact line of which my oak seems to stand: and while pleasing myself with this imagination, the very breeze that whistles under its wide branches seems to infuse new energy into the soul that ponders on the By-gone days of England's battle against

the proud pontiff of Rome. The heroes of that day, mighty in weapons that were not carnal, who conquered by dying, whose faith was victorious over the world, and who overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb—these pass in review before me, heralding the peaceful rule of divine truth; and filling my heart with hope, that if the rallying forces of the adversary again summon the servants of God to the combat, a faithful band will not be lacking to wield the sword of the Spirit, and boldly to lift up a holy standard against those who come in like a flood.

CHAPTER XVI.

IDOLATRY.

It would certainly be a boon of magnitude to the more conscientious portion of the serious world, if some sober, sound, experienced divine would afford them a clear definition of that abused word, "Idolatry," in all its allowable applications. Great liberties are taken with it; and I verily believe that some zealous Christians do often make sad the heart of the righteous whom the Lord hath not made sad, by bringing a charge of most serious import against them, in matters altogether as far removed from it as can well be imagined. God created this world a spotless paradise, for the immortal beings whom he placed in delegated sovereignty over all the inferior works of his mighty hand. Man, by rebellion, lost that rule of love; and the charter which replaced him, in a measure, on his forfeited throne was, alas! one of different character. Before Adam, every living creature moved, in all the untarnished loveliness of its pristine state, harmless, and fearless; and Adam looked on them, and as the majestic forms of animated nature passed before him, he exercised his new prerogative by giving names to each. Emerging from the deluge, when this sin-blighted earth lifted her head, glittering with the moisture of that destroying flood, the animals again came in review before man. Noah who had marshalled them into the ark, beheld their egress from it; and re-

ceived anew the grant—"The *fear* of you, and the *dread* of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered."

In like manner the soil, which as a willing servant had yielded spontaneously every tree good for meat, and all that could minister to man's enjoyment, so long as his first and chiefest joy was in his God, became through his transgression a reluctant slave, putting nothing freely forth but thorns and briars; and needing his most painful toil to compel the needful tribute of nutriment to his wants. Just and righteous was the doom: yet behold the unmerited mercy of our compassionate God; in promising the gift of His own Son, delivered up as a ransom for us all, He freely with him gives us all things. To the corn that furnishes our bread he adds full many a luscious fruit, of aromatic flavour; and over earth's surface—yea upon those penal thorns and briars,—he has scattered tints and forms of such exquisite beauty and grace, that one may fancy the very pallet from which Eden was pencilled out is left for us to gaze on; the very mould in which its glorious forms were cast, preserved; in token that earth shall yet again bloom, more lovely and more magnificent than in the infancy of our days.

So it is with the irrational creation: to the far greater part of them, man is an object of instinctive terror—the fear of him, and the dread of him are upon them; and such service as they may be brought to yield is compulsory, painful, hateful to them. But here again an exception is made: and one so touching, that unbelief itself, when stumbling at the fact of Adam's reign of love over all the creatures, may cease to cavil, in beholding a sight so common that its familiarity deadens its effect on our minds—the fond, the faithful, docile, devoted Dog, putting to shame all human attachments by the ardour of his irrepressible affection for man—for a master who, perchance, scarcely rewards with a smile the beseeching look that for hours keeps watch, to seize and rejoice in the slight token of approving notice.

If I turn to by-gone days, I cannot name

the period from early infancy to the present hour, unmarked by this relic of paradisaical confidence and love. How often when all human help was far away, and dangers too fearful to record beset my path, how often has the Lord made this creature of his will the means of my defence! Yes, in the hour of weakness, ere I had learned to endure "as seeing Him who is invisible," when poor humanity was nigh failing under the agonized throb of terror and dismay, He, the Lord, pitying the weakness of his creature, has given me cheer and encouragement, and sweet reassurance, even by the bold, bright, steadfast gaze of a watchful dog, now keenly bent in the direction of expected harm, now turned with quick intelligence to my tearful face, and almost saying in its fiery glance, "Fear not, my mistress: the hand that would injure you must first encounter the strength of these pointed fangs, and the rage of a heart that would be maddened to see you wronged." It was in the noble race of the Newfoundland breed that I was permitted thus for a time to confide; and often do I humbly bless my covenant God, to whom all things do bow and obey, for the cordial so given in hours of fainting apprehension. I do not now rest on means: for he has taught me to look far higher than an arm of flesh, or the heart of creature love; but I hope never to forget my past experience; never to despise the meanest instrument of his tender compassion towards me.

But I have wandered from the point: which was to call in question the propriety of stigmatising as idolatry a high appreciation of these things, so beautifully illustrative of the divine pity—the sweet flowers of our gardens, and those few among the animal creation that reciprocate the measure of love we may evince for them. As a matter of report, I should scarcely credit it: but so often has the rebuke been directly levelled at me, and by persons so entirely unconnected with each other, at such distances too of time and place, that it has occurred to me there must be somewhat of a general persecution going on against offenders of my stamp; and it may not be amiss at a season when our green-house plants require a little extra attention, and our small dogs a warmer cushion, to put in a word on

behalf of this maligned body of reputed idolators.

If any among us can be proved to waste her valuable hours on the selfish gratification even of a taste which the Lord implanted in Adam's mind when he set him to dress the garden of Eden and to keep it—if higher duties are neglected or hurried over, and occupations more needful to others though less congenial to ourselves be put aside:—if money that ought to be devoted to the service of our fellow creatures be squandered on a fancy, or that money's worth, in energy and application, be diverted from its proper channel—I have not one word to say in defence of the accused person: the case is altogether excluded from my plea. Again, if a pampered dog engrosses any part of that consideration which rightly belongs to our fellow-immortals so as to entrench upon their rights—if it be made the object of wasteful expenditure, or permitted to become a nuisance to others, by its rude or peevish ways—then the like conclusion is to be drawn: but conscientiously speaking, this has not been the case with me in either instance, yet have I been sorely persecuted. I counsel my sympathizing friends, who may shrink from a rebuke the justice of which they cannot feel, to fight the matter out with their assailants; not merely on the common ground of unreasonableness, but on the far more serious one of an abuse of scripture language, which ought in no instance to be suffered.

I remember, some years since, that I had arranged three small jars filled with exquisite flowers on the tables of my apartment when a young minister, warm in the fresh glow of newly-awakened zeal, coming in and detecting me in the very act of expressing delight at their loveliness, put on a sad face, and solemnly rebuked my "painted idols"—or rather me in their behalf. I made no reply, but invited him to come in the evening and take tea. Meanwhile I just trebled the number of flower-jars, and on his looking round with dismay, observed, "See, my friend, here are nine of them; and if you talk to me again as you did this morning, I promise you the sight of eighteen the next time you come." Then I made out the case much to my own satisfaction; and so far as deeds might be relied on, I

should think to his also: for from that day he never came to see me without bringing a small reinforcement for my ranks of painted idols.

"But dogs are such disagreeable things; many people dislike them, and you should, in consideration for the feelings of others, keep your dog away." So I have occasionally been told; and perhaps by a friend whose pouncet-box perpetually opened kept my little dog sneezing most piteously, and brought tears into my eyes. I could not be so unpolite as to say, "Banish your snuff-box, and then we will consider about the other nuisance;" but it so happens that, according to the favourite theory of idolatry, every one seems to have an idol—not unfrequently himself—which he is just as unwilling to dethrone as I am to drown Fiddle.

I know a person whose attachment to the canine race is as strong as can well be imagined, and well-grounded as could be required. She had a noble, a majestic, an invaluable dog of the purest Newfoundland breed, devoted to her with an affection that occasioned him to pine and dwindle away under any temporary absence of his mistress. He was, moreover, the parting gift of one so dear—so inexpressibly beloved—one who had been cut off in a moment too, by a sudden stroke—that it was impossible not to prize the relic beyond all other mere earthly treasures. Conscience, however, interfered: she was poor, and dependent on her own exertions. She had others to consider, and to them it was a privileged duty to devote her all. Circumstances obliged her to relinquish her cottage, in a comparatively rural and cheap situation, and to become a lodger in the busy haunts of men, the metropolis itself, where the accommodation and keep of so very large an animal would have formed a very heavy item of daily expenditure; and she felt that the question had become a serious one, where positive duty was opposed to feelings such as those who understand them may appreciate: to those who cannot, it would be idle to describe them. The decision was made, with, tears, aye, and with prayer too—for self was very strong, but it was made. "To sell the dog, and devote the price to charitable purposes?" No; that would have told

well; but I am relating facts. The donor had said, "Never part with Nero, except to me," and though large sums were freely offered for the beautiful creature, every thing of the kind was rejected. The dog was doomed, with a regard to his own affectionate and faithful exclusiveness of devotion. All unsuspecting he was led forth, by neighbours who were familiar with him, and chained to the stump of a tree. He looked around, with patient good humor, waiting to see what was required of him; and with the steady aim of two practised military hands, one bullet through his heart, another through his brain, without a single momentary pang of fear or suffering, stretched the noble creature lifeless on the earth. Three musquets were loaded; but he who bore the third, who had faced many a cannon in the field of battle, instead of discharging it turned away and wept.

This has been called cruelty: and the self-indulgence that still keeps a little creature which can honestly be sustained on the scrapings of the dinner plates is stigmatized as idolatry. One is as true as the other: and both are false. The first was cruel, not to the dog, but to carnal self: the latter does but lighten the labour of many a solitary hour by extorting a smile of pleasure at the gambols of a thing so harmlessly happy: a creature made subject to vanity—to all the ills and sufferings under which the whole creation groans—not willingly, not by its own transgression, but by that of man. Is it idolatry to recognize the hand of the Most High in the wonderful instinct of which He alone is the source, and to number him among the works that praise him—the gifts that gladden me?

I do not even covet the elevated view that could overlook the impressive lesson marked out in these miscalled idols. Who shall gainsay the authority which bids me consider the lilies of the field how they grow (those beautiful Guernsey lilies now before me, how I delight in them!) and which tells me that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these? Splendid, most splendid are the starry heavens, on which David gazed in rapturous adoration of the skill which formed them! but is there no trace, no brighter trace of that wonder-working hand, in the

little creature lying at my feet, feeble and timid, shrinking from the uplifted finger of menaced correction, and never dreaming of self-defence; but roused into the boldness of the lion, every hair stiffening with energetic effort, and the flash of rage kindling in his eye, if a sound be heard that threatens annoyance to his friend. Is there no lesson to crimson my cheek with the tint of shame, and dew my eye with the tear of self-reproach, when I follow up the contemplation, and measure *my love, my faithfulness, my zeal, my devotion* to a heavenly master who saveth my life from destruction, daily crowning me with loving-kindness and tender mercies—when I measure them by those of an irrational brute to one who just feeds him, and smiles on him to-day, and may forsake him to-morrow? Yes, God be praised, there is a lesson, most deeply humbling to my soul: and while thus his inferior works continually praise him, silently fulfilling the duties of their little sphere, be it mine to look on, and learn, and adore, and join the chorus in which all his saints give thanks unto him, and magnify his name.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LONELY WRECK.

THERE is one object in creation of such surpassing grandeur, so vast in magnitude, so terrific in power, so pre-eminently sublime in all its varying aspects, whether of the rudest tumult or the softest beauty, that, among an island people I often wonder to find it so rarely made the subject of delighted eulogy. Probably, however, the impressions of such as have only looked upon it from the shore are very imperfect; they cannot do justice to the glories of ocean like those who have bounded over its billows: while among the latter class a very large proportion have been so inconvenienced by the usual concomitants of a first voyage, as to retain any thing but a pleasant recollection of their trip. These considerations often withhold my hand when about to indulge in marine reminiscences: for very few of my readers

have, perhaps, been equally privileged to go down into deep waters; to see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the great deep, for long succeeding days and weeks, without even a momentary sensation that could deaden the exquisite enjoyment known only to such. A privilege indeed it is, to ride among the stormy billows with spirits as light as the foam that flashes by: to pace the deck, with confident though wary tread, inclining to this side or that, as the mighty machine rolls like a cork on the tops of far mightier waves; and to feel every nerve new braced, every pulse enlivened, every thought elevated and all the faculties expanded, as it were, to take in a scene, which for the extent of its turbulent magnificence, has no peer, no rival among created things. I desire to be thankful, that, in times of sore trial, and when as yet the tempest-torn wanderer on the sea of life had found no anchor of the soul, nor opened faith's eye to behold a sheltering heaven of safety and repose, so much of this enjoyment was vouchsafed to cheer a drooping heart. Often has that heart recognized the hand which filled it with food and gladness; often experienced the reality of the assurance, "I have girded thee, though thou hast not known me."

I am not now about to expatiate on what might appear the wild chimera of a roving imagination to the many—are they not too many?—who in quest of foreign novelties have passed over from their privileged isle to a neighbouring, unblest land, making voyages equally short and miserable, in a crowded steamer, with the accompaniment of a grating, rumbling, jarring engine, the monotonous, hurrying rush of paddle-wheels through the water, and a pennon of black smoke, defiling the atmosphere above, with an occasional descent of its murky particles on their dress. How could they realize any description of the stately, noiseless, measured sweep of a tall vessel over billows which, many a league removed from intercepting land, roll in unbroken magnitude through a fathomless abyss, with leisurely rise and graceful fall, and a melody too deep for man's squeaking contrivances to interrupt. What affinity can the bare uncouth chimney, with its sooty appendage displayed at right angles, claim with the tapering

mast, the undulating sails, gradually lessening as they rise in snowy lustre to its summit, where the long streamer gracefully mingles its negligent folds to diversify them, while beyond the broad white wing of the spanker sail, out floats St. George's banner "blent with silver cross to Scotland dear;" and the heart will throb, while the eye, fearless of encountering smoke or steam, looks up and greets the flag that "has braved a thousand years, the battle and the breeze." Oh, it were an idle attempt to embody in a tame verbal description the swelling emotions peculiar to such a season.

But ocean recollections, though always interesting, are not always joyous to me; a scene there witnessed, albeit not necessarily accompanied with any very melancholy thoughts, often recurs to my mind, when under depression; exciting that mixture of feeling so beautifully expressed in the words "As sorrowful, yet, always rejoicing," taken, as they should ever be, in connection with our Lord's parting assurance, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

It was in mid-atlantic on a bright, mild morning, when the ship, her sails languidly flapping, made scarcely any way, that an object was descried, bearing so evidently the appearance of a wreck, that one or two of our boats put off to examine it more closely. The conjecture was verified; they found it to be a vessel, wrecked and totally deserted, but by bearing a freight of timber preserved in a buoyant state. The sailors called her "water-logged." She was boarded by them and several of our passengers, who, from the absence of boats, and the removal of what was most available of her spars and rigging, concluded that the crew had made a leisurely retreat, well provided for a long trip, and with a good prospect, as was judged from the fineness of the season, of subsisting until they could fall in with other vessels, or make the Bermudas port. Nothing was found of any value: the cabins had been stripped: and only the remains of some old log-books were left, much saturated, and consequently rendered almost illegible by the salt water. Our friends came back, with very little concern on their countenances, bringing the logs, which they spread in the sun-

shine to dry, anticipating some amusement from the perusal of what they could decypher: nor were they disappointed, for I frequently saw them laughing heartily over the entries, which, they said, the captain had always made when out of humour with his cook. I sought no share in their occupation, nor sympathized in their mirth, for rarely have I gazed with more pensive thought on any object than I did, during the whole of a long morning, on the helpless wreck from which we slowly receded.

It was such a deserted thing! All belonging to her were gone. To have sunk beneath the billows and settled into one of ocean's deepest caves, would have been a more natural fate,—I almost longed to see her go down. But there she rode, in external appearance differing little from the well-manned ships that crossed her track, yet untenanted, unowned, and so emphatically alone! No chart to direct, no steersman to guide, no compass whereby to shape her course; no desired haven in view, nor any to take an interest in her fate beyond the quest of idle curiosity, or selfish avarice, such as her visiters of that day had manifested. And I thought how many bosoms had once palpitated with anxious cares for her, regarding her as the repository of their dearest hopes and fondest anticipations; how many prayers had accompanied her going out; how many wistful looks watched her expected coming in. Then, there were those at hand, the chiefest business of whose lives was to preserve her unharmed: no wind could roughen the main but it was met by some skilful manœuvre to turn it to her advantage, or, if that might not be, to shield her from its rage. Then, she was guided to shun the sunken rock, to breast the foaming wave, to catch the favouring breeze, and ever to point where all wishes were centered. Watchful eyes then woke for her, that she might pass securely over the dark waters when night was on her track: and woe to the hand that should point a hostile menace against her! for she was English; and English were the hearts that owned her. But now—The wind freshened a little, and our captain gave the cheerful word, our sailors were all at the ropes, our helmsman turned the wheel, our pennon rose with undu-

lating grace, and we proceeded on our way. I saw her tossing on the busy wave, and reeling under the sudden blast: and then I saw her no more, save as a dark lone speck upon the world of waters, which I was never to behold again.

I did not forget her; though when the log-book had gone the round of curious and idle hands it was stowed away in our captain's locker, and no one else seemed to retain a recollection of the incident. I could not forget her even then: and how can I now! There is a feeling which will never be dissevered from the remembrance of that lonely wreck: and, perhaps, in this world of strange vicissitude, not a few might be found to furnish the counterpart of her altered and isolated fate.

Does it not sometimes occur to individuals whose dispositions are peculiarly formed for the enjoyment of social and domestic happiness to be thus left alone? Not, perhaps, strictly alone in outward circumstances, but in inward experience. Their own nearest associates, whose hopes and hearts were naturally linked with theirs, are gone, removed by death, and no others appear to occupy their vacant place. It may be that the rightful owners and appointed guides of such have forsaken them, taking away what they could, and leaving the dismantled wreck to buffet every storm alone. Many may sail athwart their uncertain track; kindness may beam on them, compassion may sigh over their destiny, curiosity may pry under the semblance of sympathy, and self-interest attach itself with vigilant observance; but among all these varieties there is nothing to do away with the abiding character of actual loneliness: there are none whose fate is interwoven with that of the deserted wreck: all have their own business, their own pleasures, their own little world of private interests and affections, in which the stranger, however pitied, or even loved, cannot really intermeddle. Friendship itself cannot, in most cases, obviate this. There may be high enjoyment in the transient interview, the longer sojourn, the look of tenderness and word of sympathy, but it is not to abide. Those companions, however beloved, can only come and pass away; and the most frequent intercourse can confer no higher privilege than that of a visit.

One thing is wanting: the almost innumerable identities combined in that little magic word—Home. A home there may be, and a cheerful one: but the faces that brighten, and the voices that gladden it, may not be its rightful, inalienable property. Passengers, not the crew: and when the crew are gone, short indeed is the sojourn of such guests; the very loneliness of the situation lessening the claim on their continuance. It is not to every observer that such a condition appears pitiable: nor do all who are thus circumstanced realize what some cannot but feel: but persons there are so constituted as to form attachments not only to their fellow-creatures but to places and inanimate objects, strong enough to render applicable what has been said, in a far higher and nobler sense:

Here will I make my place of rest,
While others go and come;
No more a stranger and a guest,
But like a child at home.

In all this I can draw such a parallel to the wreck at sea, that there are times when I can turn to no other retrospect in the whole chequered vision of by-gone days; and on that I dwell, until my very heart bears a writhing testimony to the fulfilment of the word, "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation."

This is the turning point: once brought to recall that word, how rich a flood of all-satisfying consolation is poured forth on the sorrowing soul by its delicious context—"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Yea, Lord! we can derive good cheer from the very circumstance of the tribulation: for it is only grievous to such as, from the intenseness of their natural feelings, cleave to the dust with a tenacity wholly opposed to the call, "arise." That dust which they would never voluntarily leave or relinquish, and which they cannot enjoy in such moderation as to be hourly prepared for a surrender, is forcibly taken away: and perhaps the finger of God is yet farther manifested in so hedging in their way by his mysterious dispensations, that they cannot gather up another handful in place of what is gone. Such tribulation is an evident gift: it is not the stroke of an enemy, but the loving correction of a Father: and well may the soul, in tracing the work,

"be of good cheer." It is thus; it is by such means as these, that Christ who has overcome the world *for* them, overcomes it in them also. The world is an expression of extensive meaning—it signifies here not only those things that are essentially evil, as opposed to God, but all those which perish in the using—the things that are visible and temporal; and therefore liable to attract our notice before those that are unseen and eternal. It is the "world" which God's children are sanctioned to use as not abusing it; but which some of them would certainly contrive to abuse, if they were entrusted with its unlimited use. This same tempting world would overcome them; and as they love it dearly, they have tribulation in it, because it is not their own. But Christ has overcome it, and by his power keeps it from approaching to hurt them.

Actual persecution is, perhaps easier to endure than this quiescent state. Some who have tried both have found it so. They have been driven for shelter from the pelting storm unto him whom they want energy to seek in the listless calm. But patience must "have her perfect work:" and he who has told his people that they "have need of patience," will convince them of it too, by exercising them on the very points where they are most deficient. Some characters become exceedingly impatient and depressed under the buffetings of unkindness and reproach; other spirits rise even naturally with such difficulties, and breast them boldly, or endure them with fortitude, but sink at once if stirring opposition be replaced by cool neglect. It is wonderful how exquisitely each cross is adapted to the temper and disposition of its bearer. The strong are depressed, and the feeble stimulated: the sanguine are discouraged, and the drooping ones buoyed up: the loving are left alone, and the cold and indifferent beset by many claims. Those who can sever for a year with a careless shake of the hand, may meet again and again, and travel to the grave together: while such as cannot say "Good night" without a pang and a starting tear, must part—one will be taken and the other left, or both be cast into distant and widely sundered paths.

Such trouble the Lord takes to raise the beggars from their dunghill, and persuade

them to sit among his princes! Peaceable fruits of righteousness are yielded, through his overruling power, by the chastening that is not felt to be joyous but grievous—very grievous to poor humanity! That wreck at sea was forsaken of all her mates, but the sun from above shone sweetly upon her; the rains of heaven fell, to perform their cleansing work upon her decks, and to keep her little shreds of sails fair and white. The deep below refused to swallow her; yea, the element which perchance had overwhelmed her deserters upbore her still to bask in the light of day. Her case was a singular one, thereby attracting the regard of many, some of whom might, as I have done, draw a profitable lesson from her losses. And though all who came to look on her passed away, and she seemed the more alone because their faces were hid, and their voices lost in distance, still they too were but children of earth; and their sojourn, though prolonged to the end of their lives, might not have outlasted the passing day. And then, there is a crowning consolation in the fact that no man's life or merchandize was perilled in her frail being. She might sink or go to pieces, at any hour; her final dissolution would leave no perplexed survivor to struggle with surrounding waves. She was sad and solitary; and her toilsome progress through deep waters brought her no gain: but she was where and what, the providence of God had ordained that she should be; and which of his children would desire to be otherwise? Not I.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FALLEN OAK.

MANY and overpowering are the recollections excited by a glance at the tablets of former days. Perchance a leaf of an old pocket-book—perchance some lively letter, a familiar note, coming unexpectedly to hand in a search for something else, where the eye falls on a name, then in hourly use, now numbered with the things that have been. The individual almost starts into life before us, just as we last

beheld him, occupying his assigned place on earth, surrounded by all the ties that formed his happiness here. Another rapid movement of that mysterious engine, thought, and we shrink from the consciousness that all those ties are broken—his place knows him no more—his portion of earthly things is just so much cold clay as suffices to shroud his mouldering bones in the darkness of the tomb. The memento so suddenly beheld is no less suddenly laid aside; and a wish will rise that it had not intruded when the busy mind was in quest of somewhat that, by pre-occupying it, unfitted it in a measure for the startling reminiscence.

But how different is the feeling when perhaps the same recollection of the same individual is awakened in the quiet moments of a leisurely stroll through the open space, whose boundary is the blue sky above, the green sod beneath, and the graceful forms of diversified vegetation flourishing around! There, all is in keeping: though the flowers be gone, and the sky overcast with driving clouds, it is still beautifully in keeping when the image of some lost friend flits before the mind; for "man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble: he cometh forth as a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not." Types and allegories seem to accord, almost universally, with the taste of our species. The young child stretches his infant faculties more readily to grasp the truths conveyed by such a medium: the most unlettered of men, who could not follow a plain argument through two short sentences, will accompany Bunyan's pilgrim to the end of his journey, with evident relish of the savour with which that exquisite book is replete; and in the languages of nations considered savage, the wild Indians of the woods particularly, we find little else than a compendium of tropes and figurative expressions. The Holy Scriptures need not be cited as a perfect model of this parabolic style, and, look where we will, through the broad open pages of creation, dull indeed must be the eye that fails to catch the same character, pervading them in every part. For the business of life, the cares and efforts requisite to keep our worldly matters even, the study, the closet, the count-

ing-house are valuable auxiliaries; but in the hour of relief from the pressure of occupation, whether the bent of the mind be to joy or sorrow, expectation or disappointment, to meditation or devotion, give me my beloved haunt—the garden—and I cannot fail of finding that which, in the absence of all human sympathy and companionship, shall charm away the loneliness of feeling; shall heighten my joy, or soothe my grief, with sweet tales of One who is never far from the heart that desires to acknowledge his sovereignty.

The season is bleak; and what between the unlooked-for snows that heralded November, and the hurricane that marked his exit, few indeed are the flowers left to bide the blasts of the closing year. But flowers I need not: my steps are arrested in the search by an object more suitable to my purpose, and near it I linger, absorbed in thoughts as sweetly solemn as ever followed the flight of a glorified spirit to its Father's bosom. A noble oak, seemingly arrived at the last stage of its natural existence, had been, I cannot say torn up, but rather broken off with scarcely a discomposure of the earth around its roots, and there it lay, recumbent on the sod which had yielded to its pressure without apparent injury to either. Majestic when last I saw it full of life, and loaded with its leafy honours, it looked to me no less majestic in its wintry state, leafless, and unadorned, stretched peacefully on the earth, so long overshadowed by its spreading boughs. "Here, then," I mentally said, "here let me stay my steps; for what spot so meet can I find whereon to pause and think over my pleasant reminiscences of that beloved man of God, CHARLES SIMEON?"

There is not one feeling of a spiritualized mind that may not flow on unchecked, in full luxury of enjoyment, while tracing the work of God in and by that blessed servant of His. There lives not a flower, a shrub, or a plant that could so exquisitely typify the man as this fallen king of the forest, by whose trunk I seat myself, to follow up the resemblance. Here it first shot forth the young roots of its growing strength: here it attained a vigorous maturity, while succeeding crowds sat under its pleasant shadow and rejoiced. Here it faded into venerable age, and fell at last

by the same breath which so long had nourished it; fell quietly, so ripe for the blow, that nothing is disordered around it—there is no rent, no chasm: a vacancy indeed there will be when its frame is removed and out of sight—a vacancy felt by many a one, who in the stormy or sultry hour will habitually turn hither, saying, Where is our ancient friend, our pleasant shelter? But who can tell how many of the noble trees extending all around owe their being to this parent stock? For an uncomputed period, it has flourished here: and perhaps those stately buildings—perhaps yon gallant vessel that may be bearing seaward a freight of missionary treasures, owe their frame-work to the progeny of this tree. Sure I am that its prolific boughs have yielded seed for many an acre of forest plantation; while every little leaf that fell assisted to fertilize that rich and smiling sward that carpets the spot.

And so it was with Simeon: where he first vegetated in spiritual existence, there he flourished, and there, honoured with more of reverential love and regret than usually falls to the lot of man, he calmly reposes. Generations have successively sat under the teaching of his faithful ministry, acknowledging him to be indeed like a tree planted by the water-side, bringing forth his fruit in due season, while his leaf withered not; and in a most singular manner was fulfilled the promise—"Look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper." Oh, if all the rich ones of this world, or even the rich ones of the Lord's own fold, would so consecrate themselves and what they have to the service of their master as did that highly-favoured man, what a blossoming Eden we should have in many and many a spot where the howling desert now meets our shrinking sight! The recollections of what he was, and what he did, come crowding with overpowering force. So eminently did he act upon the solemn charge, "Go, work to day in my vineyard," that no one can be pointed out, since the times of inspiration, better worthy of the too-much-neglected title of a working Christian. His was not the faith that dances like a moth about the candle, doing nothing but dazzling its own eyes, and perhaps endangering its own wings by too presumptuous an approach: no, he

used every beam of that shining light as a help to read his master's will, and to do his master's work, and to illuminate the darkness of those who were yet afar off, and to whom his incessant, fervent, persevering invitation, given as largely, as fully, as universally as the need of a Saviour exists, was blessed to an extent only to be revealed at the last day.

"Blessed is he that blesseth thee" reiterates the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, to them; and with an undoubted reference to their now outcast race. Of this blessing our beloved brother now knows the value and extent. I passed not many days in his honoured company, but some three or four at one time I did: and truly can I testify that of these days scarcely an hour fleeted by without bearing on its wings some record of his heart's desire and prayer for the conversion of God's ancient people. For many years I had especially loved his name, as standing so conspicuously forth among the actual pityers of Zion, who longed to raise her from the dust: and very sweet it was to be so circumstanced as to time and place, when sojourning under the same roof with Mr. Simeon, as to see his warmest zeal called forth in this sacred cause. He was so active, so earnest, so open, and withal so very playful, that had he been an utter stranger in name and character I should have marked him among a thousand, as one to whom the statutes and work of the Lord were the very joy of his heart. But he was no stranger, though I was one to him; and a weeping stranger too, whose peculiar trial, just then, appealing to all the sympathies of his warm and generous heart, brought me more within the influence of his personal attention than otherwise I could have hoped to be admitted.

A few weeks—not a month—had elapsed since I buried my precious dumb boy: and the debility occasioned by long, anxious attendance on him, joined to the grief of such a loss, and other afflictions just then accumulated upon me, rendered me an object of even more than usual tenderness to the fond friends whose guest I was. The master of the house was indeed a devoted brother in the faith and the ministry with Simeon, still more endeared by long friendship, and by fellowship in the work for Israel. They are

now together with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and the cup, not of cold water, but cordial wine of Christian love, so freely ministered to a fainting pilgrim, is not forgotten now. No sooner did dear Mr. Simeon understand the cause of my sable weeds and tearful looks, than he set himself to comfort and to cheer me.

There was something so peculiar in the physiognomy and manner of the venerable good man; he was so long and extensively known among Christian people, that many will be able to realize the very look and gesture with which he used to beckon me to sit close beside him on the sofa, and then opening a large bible, resting one half of it on his own knee, the other on mine, he would say, "Now let me hear something of your happy dumb boy." The subject was too near my heart to be strange to my lips, and he had not long to wait. Ere I had proceeded far, one hand was laid on my wrist, the fore-finger of the other held up, and, "Stop—stop" articulated in a leisurely manner. Then he would turn over the blessed pages, until he found some scripture most beautifully, *most exquisitely* illustrative of the thing I was relating; and then he would require me to read aloud to him, keeping his finger under the line, carefully pausing at the respective stops. When it was done, he would look in my face with a gentle inclination of the head, saying, "Now"—and so continue, until something else called for another reference to the word of God. All around were smiling at the scene: it was so quaint, so perfectly characteristic of the man: but none can tell how delicious was the soothing to my really lacerated heart, as I felt the pressure of his fatherly hand on my wrist, met the complacent look of his intelligent eye, marked the interest excited in his mind by the turns of his singularly expressive mouth, and followed the movement of his finger along the precious lines of inspired consolation, and *knew* that whither the "happy dumb boy" was gone, there should his own bright spirit follow ere long. I remember too, that I was never more anxious to read correctly than when reading those short passages to him, and yet never in my life was man's applause or censure more utterly indifferent to me. Although

there was eccentricity enough in Mr. Simeon's character to force a smile from the most devoted of his reverential followers, there was enough of authority, decision, and confidence in his own powers of guiding, to compel respect from the most giddy and inconsiderate.

Our parting breakfast was very delightful: there were present a son and daughter of God's ancient Israel, both become doubly the children of Abraham by faith in Christ Jesus—the one a zealous preacher of his adored Messiah; the other a fond and faithful wife, rejoicing that he, the best beloved of her heart, had been made also the means of saving her soul. Towards them every feeling of our venerable friend seemed to set in, so to speak, with a spring-tide, strong enough to overthrow every thing before it. He quite sparkled; and often did he speak to me and bid me rejoice, as I sat beside him, in the joy of those children of Jacob. It was one of the special privileges allowed me in that house to take every day a glass of wine actually made from the grapes that grew on the mountain of Lebanon. Of this my beloved host had a supply: and never did he fail of filling my glass from it. I drank that wine of Lebanon with Wolff, and with many a son and daughter of the chosen seed; but never with greater relish than when Mr. Simeon pledged me in the draught. It is so solemn—so sweet—to know, that he, and our dear brother whose hospitality had no bounds, have indeed sat down together to sup with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We cannot quite realize the mighty truth: but now and then a glimpse seems to be given into that presence-chamber where THEY ARE; and what are the puny thorns and idle pebbles that somewhat discomfort our path thitherward, when we dwell upon the glorious fact that they ARE there!

Once more I saw, and spoke to, Mr. Simeon. He recognized me in a meeting, not very large, held in a room in Regent street, for one of our dear Irish educational societies. He ran to me: and sorrowfully told me that our dear friend H. above referred to, was ill, very ill. He then seated himself near me: and I shall not soon forget the sequel. At that time Mr. Irving had not long been led to propound his fearful heresy respecting the

human nature of our spotless Immanuel, but he had said and done enough to startle all thinking Christians; and I suppose the various errors and delusions set forth by him and his followers never had a more determined, uncompromising enemy than in Simeon. Contrary to all expectation, Mr. Irving chose to address the meeting: and in the midst of a speech unexceptionable enough, he called on the assembly to pray with him: then turning to the noble chairman, requested him to second the proposal. Lord B.—quite taken by surprise—rose, not with a very well satisfied air, and silently bowing round, intimated in that way that we should also rise. I confess that I was one who felt exceedingly disinclined to obey; not knowing what that gifted, but most erring individual might think proper to utter, as the mouth-piece of the party. But the expression of Simeon's countenance who can pourtray! he rested his elbows on his knees, firmly clasped his hands together, placed his chin against his knuckles: and every line in his face, where the lines were neither few nor faintly marked, bespoke a fixed resolve to say Amen to nothing that he had not well sifted, and deliberately approved. It was an extraordinary scene altogether, and I made my exit as soon as this episode came to an end. I never more beheld Mr. Simeon; but I shall hope never to forget his look that day. There was in it as much of sober reproof, exhortation, and caution as a look could convey.

He was the marked reverse of a theorist; his speculations touched not the unrevealed mysteries of God, but bought churches, and 'entailed pulpits on such ministers as should faithfully set forth the known word and will of the Most High. I should say that the motto of his life was, "Let him that heareth, say, Come." I hardly think he ever folded a bank-note, or fingered a guinea, without pondering how it could be made available in spreading the gospel. And then he had such a downright, hardworking, pains-taking, unceremonious way with him, that he seemed to go about such things with the same matter-of-fact sort of sober earnestness that a carpenter would exhibit when planning a piece of furniture, resolved it should be the best of its kind. He had a very summary and somewhat annoying

way of disposing of subjects that seemed to him impertinent: with no small infusion of acidity, if he thought them anti-scriptural: and few men might better judge of that than he could.

But how wretchedly poor is this sketch! I have rested and refreshed my mind on the few personal reminiscences of that blessed man, even as my body is rested and refreshed by a temporary seat near this noble oak: but how shall I send my mind abroad, to gather into one view the innumerable, wide-spread, ever-multiplying fruits of his active holiness! Confined in his stated ministry to one beloved spot, and mounting for half a century the same endeared pulpit, to what quarter of Christ's militant church on earth has his voice of love not penetrated, his helping hand not reached? This tree may have planted many a forest, lent its aid to works of art, manufacture, and commerce, beyond the possibility of computation, though here it lies, too completely worn with age to yield even a plank from its own trunk: but in the sod under my feet how many even of its this year's acorns are at present germinating, to break forth next spring in beautiful abundance for culture here, and transplantation to other soils. Yet accord to it, as a tree, the utmost limit of usefulness in its generation, our dear brother, as a Christian, far oversteps it in the multitude and magnitude of his fruits. Oh, that we may be quickened by the consideration, to bear in mind the words of our Lord, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit!" Fireside piety, closet piety, are of such moment that without them all the rest is nothing; but we are too prone to think they alone will suffice. Regard, then, Charles Simeon, who after a long—very long life passed in the most laborious, public service of his Master, would have told you that he was an unprofitable servant, a miserable offender, leaving undone what he ought to have done, and thrown on the sparing mercy of God in Christ to pardon the iniquity of his holiest things, the fearful short-comings of his most diligent services. Ponder on this, and ask what will be your feeling, if you wrap up your talent in a napkin, only to be taken out to refresh your own gaze, and barely to exhibit before the Lord, when you ought to be

earnestly trading with it. Oh, for a company of working Christians like Simeon! the armies of the aliens should soon be put to flight, and the church, clothed in her beautiful garments, become a glory and praise in the whole earth!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUM.

UNDER all circumstances, sickness is trying; but the extent to which its painful concomitants may be alleviated or aggravated, is very great. I would not dwell upon the wide distinction drawn between the cherished individual whose every want is foreseen, whose every wish anticipated by watchful friends, while no earthly care is allowed to burthen the mind, nor an anxious thought required to be taken—and the mother of a young family who has no efficient substitute to fill her arduous sphere during the hours of languishing; but who must rouse her weary spirits and exert her bewildered faculties on behalf of others when both require undisturbed repose; nor will I dwell upon the contrast presented by the child of abundance, amply provided with this world's good, free from that corroding thought for the morrow, which asks, "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" and one whose daily effort supplies the daily expenditure, and who, during the long hours of reluctant inaction, cannot but calculate by how many of premature and harassing exertion must the ground thus lost be regained. These are obvious distinctions and no one can fail to recognize them: but there are others, little reckoned of by many, though placing a gulf of unmeasurable distance between the actual experience of individuals precisely alike in external circumstances, and visited perhaps with just the same measure of bodily ailment. The sick-bed of believers in Christ is a place where the Lord for a moment dims his jewels, in order to give them a brighter burnish; and this they know, and struggle to lie still, for they feel that they are in his hand and

desire to be nowhere else. The couch of a person wrapt in thoughtless security, has also a peace of its own; the false peace of a blind man, who walks on in smiling contentment towards the brink of a pit that he sees not. But there is another sick-bed, alas! there are hundreds and thousands of such in this privileged land, where, even now while I write, now, while the severity of winter has barbed the dart of disease, and a mysterious hand directed it to strike deep into many a strong frame: the sick-bed of the helpless, hopeless sinner, whose guilty deeds appear in all their crimson dye, with a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation beyond the grave that is evidently yawning to receive him. This is a wide and varied class; not a few such are writhing in pangs that they conceal from others, who little suspect their existence there; not a few are battling with conscience in desperate hardihood of purpose, or swallowing the poison of delusion from lips too ready to speak peace where there is no peace: but I am now, in thought, dwelling on a single though most awfully numerous branch of that wide class of unequivocal transgressors who cross our daily path in all the successive gradations of their sad career: from the bloom of youthful beauty, gaudily tricked out in flaunting display, to the squalid spectral object whose pale cheek, hollow eyes, trembling limbs, and tottering gait, proclaim for how very short a period she has yet to drag that wasted half-clad form along ere it must sink where ours shall mingle with it. Yes, however high we may toss the disdainful head, however far avert the loathing eye, however cautiously protect the utmost verge of our garment from coming into contact with her defiling tatters, we shall mingle at last—mingle here in one common mass of corruption, and mingle hereafter in one mighty throng of animated existences, gathered for judgment before the eternal throne.

It was marvellous in the eyes of Simon the Pharisee that Jesus suffered a woman of the city, who was a known sinner, to touch him! Tear after tear dropped unrebuked upon those holy feet, from eyes that had lured many a soul into the paths of death; and tress after tress was applied to dry those drops away, that had

oft been braided with gold and pearl, for the express purpose of ensnaring those whom he came to deliver. And I bless His holy name, he has so far taught me that I dare not pass a poor lost sister of my own vile race without remembering that touching scene, and feeling as though to me was addressed the comprehensive appeal, "Seest thou this woman?" I have in my garden a flower that bears on its leaves a memento I would not willingly forget; and when I see the long, pale, dishevelled, petals of the white Chrysanthemum shaken wildly by the gale, while its slender stem is bowed, and its sickly-looking leaves hang down, in helpless resignation to its comfortless lot, I think of the little cottage where it stood hard by the door, to plead with me as it were, for one within, of whom it seemed the most affecting type that could have been devised.

It was then winter, comparatively mild, but still winter, and very few of the flowers had survived even in that sheltered spot. The white Chrysanthemum, however, was not quite alone; but so accompanied as to throw out its peculiarly fading and forlorn character in more striking relief. Close behind it on the cottage-wall, peeped forth a few glowing china-roses, with a cluster of vigorous buds; and some double marigolds spread their rich, deep, golden hues at its root. Not far away stood a dwarf holly, be-dropped with scarlet berries; and whatever remained of flowers and foliage partook so largely of that firm texture and decided tint which conveys the idea of health and enjoyment, that the poor Chrysanthemum looked the very personification of a sick, sorrowful, trembling stranger, in a circle where sickness, sorrow, or fear might rarely intrude. The place was one where my assigned duty would have called me, but I had been ill; and a dear young friend, ever ready to the work of Christian love and pity, had supplied my lack of service by a prompt response to the summons that she received. Deeply affected by the account she gave me, I now accompanied her, not to interfere, but to witness her efforts; and very rarely have my feelings been more painfully excited, or my indignation more strongly provoked. Ascending to a very small neat

room of the little cottage, I saw on a bed a young woman of no ordinary share of beauty, not, apparently, much changed by illness, with a bright glow on her cheek, and a fire in her rich dark eye, and a smile playing round a very lovely mouth, so unlike what I had expected to behold, that I knew not how to account for it. However I sat down on the bed, while my friend, sitting nearer the pillow, bent over the sufferer, addressing her in gentle tones, and in the sweet language of the Gospel. For some time she spoke unheeded; at length the bright eyes were raised to her face, and a transparent trembling hand was stretched towards her head, with the words—"Let me look at your bonnet, Miss. Pretty bonnet?" Emma yielded to the request, at the same time sadly observing to me that it was not a lucid interval, and then I saw the extent of the calamity, as regarded this world—reason had fled.

While the poor maniac amused herself with the bonnet, and with her sister's little infant, which she tenderly noticed, I learned the particulars of her story. The family was poor but respectable; and all had gone out to service excepting Bessie, who remained with her parents, taking in needle-work, and frequently so employed for the various shops in London. At the age of eighteen she was suddenly missed from home; and no tidings could be heard of her until four years after; when, in the summer, she came down to that cottage on an unexpected visit to her sister, who had married an industrious man, and passed a day with them. A gentleman accompanied her to whom she evidently was not married; but as she was handsomely dressed, and came in a post-chaise, and appeared in high spirits, and as the *gentleman*—for such, in rank he was—treated her with much affection, and behaved to her humble relatives with great affability, the poor people, culpably ignorant of their duty, forbore either to question or remonstrate with her, and Bessie returned, promising them another visit.

The promise was fulfilled, when six months after she was again brought to their door in a post-chaise, the driver of which delivered a letter to the sister, and while she was reading it, departed, leav-

ing Bessie. In this letter the *gentleman* stated that the poor girl had been very ill; that change of air was the only thing requisite for her recovery; and earnestly implored them to give her lodging and nursing until she should regain her health. Attention being turned to the poor creature thus thrown on hands little capable of assisting her, it was discovered that she was raving: and also that the thrush had broken out in her mouth, with other symptoms so fatal that the medical man, who was hastily called in, at once declared her to be dying. She had, in fact, been confined for three weeks to her bed; and the inhuman seducer, who had first stolen her from her home (which broke the hearts of both her parents) and retained her in worldly abundance on guilty terms for four years, no sooner found her thus becoming a burden on his hands than he had her taken from her bed, to encounter the rough blasts of a severe winter's day; and so exposing her to almost certain death, sent her to those whose daily labour could but just scantily feed their own little ones, to suffer all the privations inseparable from such a change: even if, as was very near being the case, the irritated feelings of one on whom poor Bessie had no claim, did not provoke him to deny her the shelter of his roof. A sister's love, however prevailed; and she was tenderly nursed; while the lucid intervals, long, but not frequent, were diligently improved by my dear young friend, with an earnest desire for the salvation of her soul. How far the Lord might bless the means of grace under which she was so singularly brought, it is not for us to say: but we were not left without hope concerning her. At first, when my friend spoke to her of the compassionate love of the Redeemer, showing forth the exceeding riches of that grace for which all are invited to plead—the fulness of that pardon which, in Christ Jesus, is offered to the vilest of sinners—she seemed to consider it rather a mockery of woe than as an encouragement; for she fixed on the speaker an incredulous look, saying, "Oh, don't talk so to me, Miss!" By degrees she became less reluctant to listen: and after hearing much more to the same effect, she grasped her visiter's hand, saying, "I should not be afraid to die if I

might go to heaven:" then added in an agitated manner, as Emma rose to go, "If you will come to see me again, you will be *my dear*." The visit was repeated often; and once or twice, at her urgent request, was her kind teacher sent for when reason was perfectly awake: but only four days intervened between her first arrival and her entrance on the eternal world. I saw her a second time, and then the colour had left her cheek, the fire was quenched in her eye, the smile had departed from her swollen lips, and a character of restless discomfort was upon her vacant countenance, while faintly, but fondly calling on the name of her destroyer. It was then, sadly contrasted with the healthy peasants and blooming babes around her, that she became so identified with the Chrysanthemum under her window as to leave a lasting impression on my mind, ever to be revived as I look on the flower. A few hours before her death, Emma saw her speechless, and nearly motionless, but perfectly sensible, and expressing by such signs as she could make, a wish to have her sent for. When asked if she felt a hope that her sins were pardoned through the Lord Jesus, with a request to hold up her hand if she did, she raised it as far as she had power to do; and this, with the fixed, calm, affectionate look with which she received her friend's last farewell, and the character of perfect peace spread over her countenance, was all that we had to build on, as to the state of her feelings. The evident fact that she had never before heard of Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, and that she heard of him gladly, afforded more solid grounds to hope that he had sent the poor wanderer there to be called into his fold. But he has left a veil upon the work which human hand cannot lift: and far rather would I on this, as on other occasions, employ the little knowledge that I have in proclaiming to sinners the exceeding love of Him who died for them, than in prying into matters which will be fully revealed when faith is swallowed up in sight.

The story of *Bessie C*—— is that of hundreds, yea of many thousands around us, as regards her first deviation from the path of moral rectitude. Had her sickness not been fatal, and had her sister's home afforded her no refuge beyond the

period of her illness, what would have awaited her? A state of comparative luxury must have rendered distasteful the humble fare of a poor cottage, and the daily drudgery by which even that fare must have been earned would have been intolerable. It was plain that the seducer had for ever abandoned her; and, if unrenewed in spirit, it cannot but be believed that she would have sought in the wages of guilt those worldly comforts and gratifications that had become necessities in her sight. Another step, and another, in the downhill path of that awfully rapid descent, would soon have brought her to the level of the most repulsively abandoned and lost; and disgust might have prevailed to avert the pitying eye, to withdraw the outstretched hand, and consequently to restrain the pleading voice that told of a refuge from everlasting destruction—of a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and a heaven purchased for the very bond-slaves of hell. It is dreadful to reflect that the more desperate the case becomes with these wretched wanderers, the more reluctant we are to pause in their path, and bid them turn, and flee to Jesus.

My garden would be but a poor preacher, if it had nothing to say to me on behalf of my erring sisters: and the sentiment that could have wept over *Bessie*, still blooming and, in appearance, not only gentle but modest, yet would turn from another homeless outcast, because she is almost brutalized by similar vice and frenzied by despair, cannot be Christian sentiment. It is the mere romance of excited feeling, ready to assume the colour of religion, but it does not emanate from it as an effect from its cause. We can, as it were, endure to take, through a vista, a dim and distant view of what we shrink from contemplating more nearly. The full reality, more broadly displayed, the actual extent to which vice and cruelty hold unchecked their appalling sway over the lower classes of our population, in and around the larger cities, would almost quench the very breath of prayer for this guilty land. The glittering sword of vengeance would be seen suspended over us, and the awful voice be heard, "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

I could have told a sadder tale: I could have led my readers into a deep and noisy cellar of dark St. Giles', and curdled the blood in their veins, even though I had left untold the half of what I have there beheld on a dying bed: but I forbear. My object is to plant a thorn in their consciences that they may not rest in peace and fancied blamelessness, while callous to the hurt, the deep and deadly hurt of the daughters of their people. "Is there no balm in Gilead? no physician there? Why then is not the hurt of the daughter of my people healed?" Yes, there is balm in Gilead; there is a Physician, a Healer, alike ready to hear and omnipotent to help. But they, poor wounded ones! know him not; no man directs them to seek Him; no man cares for their souls. They go astray, they fall, they perish; they lie in hell like sheep. And one by one, as the wretched victims pass away, the finger of him who overlooks no living soul is pointed to her, and the now unheeded voice that must and will one day be heard and answered, repeats the emphatic question: "SEEST THOU THIS WOMAN?"

CHAPTER XX.

THE DAISY.

If I were required to decide what in the kingdom of God's visible creation, commonly called nature, is the most heart-cheering spectacle, I should be inclined to say, the first demonstration of awakening life among the vegetable tribes, that have been slumbering in death-like torpor and naked desolation through the wintry season. Sure at least I am, that when, as is often the case, the eye which last looked abroad upon a dreary landscape of spreading snow and leafless sticks, escapes the confinement of a sick room to take its next survey where, under the warm, bright beam of a clear sky, the little buds are perceptibly swelling into magnitude against a sunny wall, while here and there perhaps a bold leaflet ventures to hold up its green mantle to the ray, and closely bedded in their circle of crisp, pale leaves, the primrose and polyanthus peep forth, with-

out yet venturing to rise upon their stems,—sure I am that the sensation which thrills through my frame is more pleasurable than the same objects in any other stage of their wonderful existence have power to impart. Always delightful, in all their associations, are the sweet children of the garden, the hedge-row, and the grove: but nothing is so touching as the first pledge of the approaching spring. It leads the mind at once, and with affecting power, to that sure word which, if the promise of God *could* be made of none effect, our sins—my sins—would have provoked the withdrawal of: that seed-time, and summer, and harvest, equally with winter, shall not fail. Though every man be a liar, God is true; though we daily deny him, he continueth faithful, and cannot deny himself. The cloud, the storm, and the snow-drift, the inundated path, the black unsightly soil, the withered skeletons of shrub and tree, these are what we may receive as our portion, and be thankful that the bursting torrent, the rending earth and volcanic fire are not super-added, to requite our obstinate rebellion. But while we go on to sin, to forget all his benefits, and neglect his commands, the Lord is not to be turned from his purposes of mercy. "He hath said, and shall he not make it good?" The appointed season comes, and the mighty work that has been progressing unseen begins to manifest itself in the gradual change of gloom to sunshine, torpor to animation, sterility to luxuriance, and the swarthy aspect of an uncultivated expanse to the endless variegations of vivid green, bedecked with every tint of glowing beauty.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good!

What a miracle of madness is that which characterizes evil man. "God is not in all his thoughts." None of us can plead exemption from the charge: our admiration of these exquisite creatures are often, very often, unmixed with a reference to the Creator. Science will examine their wonderful mechanism, without giving instant and continual glory to the wisdom that devised it; and taste will revel in their exquisite tints, independently of the skill that pencilled them. Even those who by grace are enabled to see God in every thing, and love to retain him

dearly loved, compared with that afforded by the inspired apostle, who bids us "comfort one another with these words." And what words are they? That they who sleep in Jesus shall the Lord bring with him, when he descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God—that all his people, caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, shall be FOR EVER with the Lord. It is the sure and certain hope of that eternal re-union that makes each succeeding meditation on departed servants of Christ more delightful than the preceding: because another portion of time has elapsed since last we thought on them, and by so much is eternity the nearer. Oh, the blessedness of making our own calling and election sure! What are the dearest forms of earth but a crop of smiling daisies, about to fall before the mower's scythe? It is true that as "friend after friend departs," the Lord, in compassion to human infirmity, gives us others, to gladden by their love and sympathy the otherwise desolate path; but cold and forgetful is the heart that clings not to individual recollections, hovering over each solitary grave, and realizing David's sorrow, "He shall not return to me." No, the beloved form shall never more appear on earth; the endeared features shall not again smile affection on us, or the well-remembered voice utter tones of encouragement. "But I shall go to him, rejoins faith, and sorrow is turned into holy joy. Those who are with Christ—surely it is sweet to go to them, and to join in their song of praise. Surely we may well bide the pelting of a few storms on earth, though our way may be lonely, and our path dark, in the assured prospect of a rest where neither storm, nor darkness, nor sorrow can enter: where the former things shall have passed away, and all be created new; gloriously new, and everlastingly glorious.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE WALL-FLOWER.

AMONG the hardy flowers that scarcely need more than a passing gleam of watery sunshine to tempt them forth, is one of

which from early childhood most of us have taken notice. For me it bears a charm in it, composed of such varied ingredients that I hardly know how to define it. I never cast my eye upon the Wall-flower, but a long chain of indistinct recollections and half-formed associations seems to awaken, or, more properly speaking, to lull me into a sort of dream, understood by those, and perhaps those alone, whose early haunts have been among the crumbling relics of remote national antiquity, and their chosen contemplation of the stirring events of England's former days. Of all the vegetable world I have found this common flower my pleasantest companion in such scenes; and the readiest to unlock those stores of fancy which, although in my estimation they have yielded to more important things, will yet, subordinately but sweetly, harmonize with holier themes. I am not, I never was, and devoutly hope that I never shall be, one of those who decry as narrow-minded or illiberal the burning glow of patriotic feeling; or who would own no national preference in spiritual things. Foreign languages, manners and fashions have greatly tended to deteriorate the good old English spirit that once prevailed among us; and, as for our twin-sister, poor Ireland, we are compelled to give heed to her present claims, and to turn an anxious eye to her disordered shores, because we have given our ancient enemy such a vantage ground there as to keep us in a state of restless observation, surveying their manoeuvres; but of her old chronicles, the thrilling tales connected with her stately castles, her decaying fortresses and mysterious towers, we are still deplorably ignorant. Whence comes this deadened feeling in what regards our island domain? I know not; I only know that my nationality is very strong, and that I rarely meet with any one who seems thoroughly to sympathize in it; who will grasp as a treasure an old coin, however defaced by the handling of many succeeding generations, which bears the stamp of England, or Ireland, or of Scotland, and find a volume within its narrow compass; or who will pace like me the site of some ancient palace or dilapidated hall, touched by emotions that the mighty ruins of Rome herself could not call forth.

But I am rarely alone in imagination, which at such times is all but a reality; for I generally find the wall-flower there, striking its tenacious root into any narrow crevice, and waving its streaked flag above the ruins. There is particularly in the single, wild sort, a character so bold and free, so lively and determined, that, combined with the delight it seems to take in breathing perfume round the old forsaken ruin, whose grey brow it decorates with a wreath of green and gold, the flower alone would suffice for a companion, seeming to say, as it meets my look, "Let who will pass them by, we love the wrecks of our dear country's olden time: let who may forget, we cherish the remembrance of our gallant struggles, her mighty deliverances, and all that her God hath done in her for his own glory, and for her preparation as a chosen lamp to shed the light of truth over a darkened world." There was a time when the chivalry of England alone engrossed my thoughts: her magnificence at home, and her puissance abroad: her charter, grasped by mailed hands at Runnymede, her bannered lion, borne upon the plain of Cressy or of Agincourt; the outgoings of her naval armaments, to prepare the way for planting her forests of commercial masts in every distant port: and even her domestic wars, her castles stormed by kindred hands, when the wild clamour of feudal strife was heard amid her shires, and the private bickerings of rival barons could be stilled but in the death-cries of their faithful serfs.

And all this is well remembered yet: but all appears one mighty march, by slow, and painful, and circuitous steps, towards the summit of her true glory: all wrought, though the actors knew it not, nor desired, nor dreamed it—all wrought to make her what she still is, PROTESTANT—the land of the Bible.

But has the Wall-flower no individual reference like any other sweet companion of the garden? Indeed it has: intimately it is connected with the remembrance of one who has long lain entombed beneath the towering walls of as stately, as superb, and interesting a relic of our early architecture, as could well be found in England. She it was who certainly instilled into my infant mind the first prin-

ciple of patriotic feeling. It glowed within her own breast with an ardour that neither age could chill nor the indifference of others discourage. I love to recall the hours when, having perhaps brought from my father's extensive garden a sprig of the Wall-flower—I knew it was her favourite shrub—to replenish the little jar of sweets that she loved to arrange, I leaned my elbows on her knee, and caught from her lips the clear and animated chaunt with which she gave forth the famous ballad of Chevy Chase. There was a lovely one beside me—never were he and I found apart; and we together joined our little voices to that of our delighted instructress; whose colour, always high, would be ruddier, her uncommonly bright hazle eyes assuming an additional sparkle, and her neck rising more perpendicularly from the old-fashioned bodice that supported it, when she took up the stanza,

The first that did him answer make,
Was noble Percy, he,
Who said, "We list not to declare,
Nor show whose men we be."

In fact the dear old lady prided herself not a little on a direct descent by the female side, from that redoubtable earl: while collaterally she could claim kith and kin with not a few of England's gallant 'squires; and dwelling in a cottage, contented with the simplest fare, utterly indifferent to all that others deemed so tempting of this world's pomp and pleasure, she rejoiced in her pedigree, and did her best to infuse her genuine patriotism into the second generation of her children, as successfully as in some instances she had done into the first.

But this was not all: there was more which then I understood not, nor could any around me have done so. She had a dearer feeling than her patriotism; a richer treasure than her pedigree. Seldom, if ever, did I visit her little abode without finding her engrossed with a study that seemed the abiding joy of her heart. An old Bible was constantly on her lap; and many things she said to us concerning its blessed truths, of which I do not retain one distinct recollection; but I know that some of the most sublime, awakening and deeply spiritual passages of God's book were first pointed out to me by her aged finger, enforced by a re-

mark which was little heeded by us, for we wanted what we thought better amusement. For some years before childhood was passed, the place of our abode was changed, and we could rarely see her, as the distance was several miles: but again we were brought within a nearer proximity; and at times I felt a growing interest in the theme which I now am sure was nearest to her heart. But I did not freely express this; and she, accustomed to be perfectly alone, if not openly opposed in these matters, was timid in bringing them forward. It was not long ere her grave was dug within the noble quadrangle of the cathedral where she loved to worship: and so in death, as in her life, is the remembrance of this venerable relative interwoven with those thoughts wherein the wild sweet wall-flower seems so fully to sympathize that it is part and parcel of the whole.

Often have I considered the touching case of those aged pilgrims who towards the close of a long day, first perceive a beam of light on their weary road. It does happen often that the eyes of all belonging to such a one being yet sealed in impenetrable darkness, the avowals made as to that gladdening beam are received with derision, or at best, with a pitying incredulity that tends painfully to repel the overflowings of a joyful heart, and to close the lip of praise so far as man is concerned. But more frequently, in our day of very flourishing head-knowledge, it is the lot of the simple trusting soul that has just learned to lay hold on eternal life by faith in Christ Jesus, to be perplexed and harassed, and cast down by the high assumption of some who are ready, if not to despise the day of small things, at least to add a great deal to the plain and sweet assurance, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." It is often required of those who are resting on this word, and rejoicing in a hope that maketh not ashamed, that they should receive a certain set of doctrines, and attain to a certain degree of what is considered maturity in faith, before they are allowed to feel themselves in the haven of spiritual rest. I have often grieved, bitterly grieved, to witness this idle, and I will say unscriptural teasing of the minds and consciences of others: but never so much as when the

party thus held at bay is an aged traveller, whose shadow is fast lengthening and whose trembling limbs demand a strong prop, as they approach the precipice. My dearest study, my most delightful and invigorating exercise, (after communion with God in his word, and by prayer,) has been among the records of our English confessors and martyrs; and although I find, here and there, a divine who had searched into the deep mysteries of God, yet I recognize, in by far the greater number of his glorified ones, the most simple, single reliance on God as a Father, on Christ as a Redeemer, and on the Holy Spirit as a Teacher and Comforter, without an attempt to proceed farther than this, and the great test of a renewed heart—holiness of life. We are now splitting daily into new parties; each one hath a doctrine, hath an interpretation; and makes his own notions the standard of his neighbour's faith. It was not so, when the militant church had external, visible foes to contend with: these are intestine commotions, arising from too much ease and fulness of bread, and a superabundance of spiritual pride. I withdraw from them in pain and disgust; and with the little sprightly Wall-flower unfolding its blossoms in the garden beside me, I follow in thought the course of its many-featured family, until my mind rests on the inhabitant of some deserted ruin, garnishing the wall where tapestry once spread its gorgeous surface; breathing its fragrance silently, where music often filled the now roofless space, and costly perfume loaded the confined air; but where perhaps some heart beat high in holy resolve to brave the loudest of Rome's thunder, and the fiercest of her murderous fires, strong in the faith that is in Christ Jesus; knowing, and desiring to know only Him, and Him crucified: and leaving all the subtle points of disputation to others.

There is one thing that Satan especially hates: he hates to see us working, when we have ceased from attaching the slightest meritorious value to what we do. He raises a shout of legality, and tries to frighten us into the shades of inert contemplation. He cannot hinder the Lord from lighting our candle, but he often contrives to clap a bushel over it, woven, perchance, of scripture-texts, which were

given for a very different purpose. Oh that we were less ignorant of his devices; more guarded when he transforms himself into an angel of light!

I am not wandering from the Wall-flower and its associations: I am thinking of some who could have warned, have taught, have strengthened me, by the word of timely exhortation, had they not been too selfishly wrapped up in individual enjoyment of that which God never gave to be enjoyed alone. Many a stroke of the rod might then have been spared, which fell most heavily upon the un instructed wanderer: and the case is by no means a singular one. I do not here cast a reproach on that venerable individual who lives in a warm though somewhat dusky recess of my heart: she, I know, did what she could; and she had her own cross to bear as a poor hungry sheep, who looked up, and was not fed by man's hand. Egypt was not darker during its days of supernatural visitation, than was the place of her abode in a spiritual sense. She had the beautiful, the rich, and the divinely-scriptural liturgy of our church, and dearly did she love it: she had the abundant portions of God's word contained in its daily services, and devoutly did she listen to them under the vaulted roof of that noble pile: but from its pulpit, though supplied by a constant variety of teachers, she heard not the glad tidings of salvation by the blood of Christ. No social meeting for prayer and mutual edification supplied the lack of public preaching: no kindred spirit was found, as I think, to cheer her quiet home with the voice of individual faith and love: but she had her Bible, she read it, she loved it, she prayed over it: and lonely mariner as she was on a wide and perplexing sea, that chart was her guide to the blessed haven of eternal life. I doubt not this.

It is very affecting to behold the generations of mankind ripened, then decaying, and silently dropping away into an unseen world. There are very many of whom I can say

How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and withered in their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight.

It is a dying world: a world of such incessant change, that as well might I set

my affections on the tints of the gathered flower, now fading and shrivelling in my hand, as on any thing that draws mortal breath. A scythe, invisible to us, is moving in its appointed circuit, and we know not how many of our own choicest blossoms lie within that doomed space. It is never idle; day and night, summer and winter, on the snows of Lapland, and beneath the burning zone—in the glittering court, amid the festive party, through the low and peaceful cottage, and over the wide waves of the mighty main—it moves, it ever moves, slaying its ten thousands as it goes. I have seen, not its movement, for that is visible only to God—but its effects. I have seen the flowers that best I loved, that adorned my own little spot of home, in the morning green and growing up, and in the evening cut down, dried up, and withered. Yea, in a literal morning and evening; while, far and near, among kinsfolks, friends and acquaintance, the living are out-numbered by the dead.

It is an awful contemplation; and the voice that comes from a multitude of swelling mounds is not to be disregarded. It speaks of what remains above earth's surface, and cries "Vanity of vanities: all is vanity." It utters the word of admonition, "What is your life? is it not a vapour that passeth away?" It tells of hope and triumph to the believer, "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die—this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality—O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It pleads for the living, to whom this hope is yet unknown: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest."

Surely the Wall-flower that overtops the crumbling ruin of what was once magnificent in beauty, and all but impregnable in strength, may sweetly typify the assured hope of glory, fixing its roots in the very corruption of that which it adorns, and blooming there because all else has ceased to shine. Natural strength has departed, original beauty is for ever gone: but the wind blowing where it listed has wasted a seed to the spot, and God has nourished it with many a soft and silent fall of dew. It succeeds all other glories,

and surpasses them all; for the former things which have passed away were man's poor workmanship, and were dead in the season of their loftiest pride; whereas the lovely vistant that has occupied their place, has an excellence never known to them—it lives—it grows; for it was planted by the Lord.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WHITE CLOVER.

"THE voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the godliness thereof is as a flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

No language but that of inspiration can suitably express the swelling emotion of the heart when a poor child of dust looks round on the scene of death's hourly devastations, and feels that the scythe has just cropped away some one of *his* most cherished blossoms. There is but One of whom it can be fully said, He knows what is in man: we are riddles to each other, and paradoxes to ourselves. That which was created for eternity, became in its most perceptible part, mortal: that which was formed light, now invaded by gross darkness, that which was made a dwelling of love and peace, now transformed into a battle-field of perpetual hatred and strife—may well be a source of perplexity to its own clouded and bewildered faculties in any state. The more so, perhaps, when the day-spring from on high breaks in again to scatter the resisting darkness: when the dove of peace once more spreads her brooding wing over the scene of conflict, and partially hushes the storm: when the gate of a blessed immortality is thrown wide in the distance, and the spirit enabled to gaze upon its home struggles, and gradually prevails over the fleshy impulse that cannot but cling to earth. There was a time when body and spirit together served God, rejoicing in their happy union,

under his forming hand, a time when earth with all that it contained, lay basking in the smile of its Almighty King, or moved in undeviating obedience to his divine will. And when on a bright spring morning in freshness of health and buoyancy of spirit, I walked abroad, warmed by the chastened beam, fanned by the light and fragrant breeze, while the little wild flower laughs from among the meadow grass, the yellow butterfly sports before me, the bee pursues her cheerful way, and birds rejoicing flutter through the branches that extend once more their screen of delicate foliage. I cannot quite realize the awful truth that man is a rebel, and the earth a blighted thing: that, spite of this hour's enchantment, the whole creation groans and travails in pain together; and that if even my bodily sight could penetrate to the distance of a few short miles around, I should behold such scenes of crime, of sorrow, and of death, as would divest of all its charms the narrow circuit of my present contemplation: and compel me to exclaim under the fullest impression of its humiliation, defilement, and fragility, "Surely the people is grass!"

There is a class of good persons who too readily condemn what God has in no instance denounced. They not only disapprove the expression of admiration and delight, in surveying the perishable but still most lovely and glorious wreck of what was once so perfect and so good—they censure the indulgence of warm attachment to the fellow-pilgrims who are passing like us through the clouded and polluted scene, to the rest which remaineth for the people of God. Ardent love for our friends is not unfrequently stigmatized as idolatry: and the chill of an unjust rebuke is thrown heavily on a warm heart, beating with the impulse of sanctified affection. Against such benumbing influences, I always did, and always will, in thought, word, and deed, maintain an uncompromising protest, confirmed by scriptural precept and example. I know I am not to set my affections on things on the earth, that is, on the perishing things of time, which are destined to vanish away: but I am yet to learn that a child of God, whose soul is sealed with the promise of eternal life whose body is made the temple of the living God now, and

destined to be changed hereafter into the likeness of Christ's glorious body and made a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem—I am yet to learn that such a one is a thing of earth whereon I must not set my affections: if words are to be taken in so literal a sense, as to bar all reference to the spirit of their meaning—if all "things on the earth" are to be excluded from our affections, we must take heed lest we love our bibles too well, or value too highly those means of grace which necessarily consist of visible, audible, and tangible things. The fact is that some individuals are of a cool temperament, their feelings not so easily drawn out, nor their sympathies so readily awakened as those of a different class. These are apt unconsciously to form a standard by their private interpretation of scripture; and to make the measure of their individual experience the rule for judging others. They consider as extravagant, fanciful, and enthusiastical, the fervency of attachment of which they are not themselves capable: and often check or at least ruffle, the flow of those kindly affections which form the richest sweetness of, perhaps a sea of bitters, in the lot of their more ardent friends. When I meet with these sage reprovers, I let them say what they please and make little reply, if any; for I well know that it would be an idle task to argue with a blind man on the comparative beauty of colours. They cannot make me angry; because when they tax me with a wilful excess, I recognize in them an involuntary defect, beyond my power to supply. Therefore I leave them to take the way that pleases them, and with renewed enjoyment pursue my own.

Not one of these was my beloved Anne S. Never did the warm current of devoted affection more freely bound through the veins of an Irish heart than in hers. Throughout a lot of trial, such as few are called on to encounter, she was upheld by such experimental enjoyment of her Redeemer's love to her his chosen child, that, loving her brethren as she knew the Lord loved her, according to his own gracious commandment, her sanctified affections went forth like the sunbeams, glowing more ardently nearest the centre of their home, but warming and brightening

whithersoever they could reach. Dear, dear Anne S.! Short indeed was our permitted intercourse here; but it is soothing to my inmost spirit to know, that as fervently as two poor creatures of dust could love, so fervently did we, by the grace of God, love one another.

If my types were always characteristic of their object, and I sought to do justice to Anne, I might look among the cedars of Lebanon, or the palm-tree of the east for some fitting emblem of her elevated mind, her superior attainments, and overshadowing guardianship of those who clustered around her. But lowliness was the prevailing trait in my gifted friend: and often as I traced the passionate love of her warm heart for the land of her birth, I almost regretted that the shamrock was already dedicated to my precious dumb boy; and in my thought I likened her to another and more intrinsically valuable member of the same family. My young and happy days were passed much in the fields; and there I had, and still have, an especial favourite among the flowers that gem the grass. Though little esteemed, because little marked, the blossom of the White Clover may vie in beauty and in fragrance with many a proud tenant of our cultivated gardens. Often have I stooped to gather the elegant globe, as it rose from its cluster of green trefoil, and after inhaling the perfume of its united cups, I have drawn them one by one, from their stalk, to suck the abundant store of honey concealed in each recess. I could not point out an individual among the flowers combining so much of elegance and usefulness—so pleasant to the eye of taste, so prized by the hand that only seeks for profit: and withal so clad in lowliness, so quietly bending beneath the foot of pride, so calmly lifting up again its gentle head in undefiled simplicity to heaven.

And in default of genuine shamrocks, I have seen the clover, as a trefoil, pressed to the lips of this dear exile of Erin, while every feature bespoke the deep and varying emotions recalled by that action. An exile she was—a willing though sorrowing exile; and I cannot retrace the briefest outline of her touching story without a struggle of feelings in which indignation would fain predominate. Who does not know how great have been the trials of

Ireland's persecuted clergy? Few indeed know *what* they have been; but that they have been great, very great and bitter, none among us are ignorant. Anne was the eldest of a motherless family, every heart twining round the surviving parent with all the fondness of intense filial attachment—with all the reverence due to a devoted minister of the gospel of Christ. Their early years were those of prosperity in worldly things: and accomplishments of no common order were added to what the God of nature had given—what the God of grace had renewed and sanctified. In the fond father, as in a centre, all their earthly affections met: and his delight it was to point them to a higher aim. Happy, most happy for them, that so he did—it is now their richest solace under reiterated bereavements. I may not enter too fully into the hallowed precincts of such a home as theirs: It must suffice to say that the general distress fell heavily upon it: but more in anticipation than in the immediate presence. With the foresight and self-devotion peculiar to her character, Anne marked the thickening cloud; she called her sisters around her; and together, in prayer, they decided on a plan which was not made known to their father until the very eve of its execution. It was, that all, save one in extremely delicate health, and another yet as a child among them, should become self-exiled from their pleasant home together; and by diligently using, for a time, the gifts acquired under very different circumstances, they should contribute to sustain in comparative comfort the diminished circle thus left around the domestic hearth. "Little," said Anne to me, "little did my darling father suspect the reason of my diligent study of botany; or, when he saw me delighted at the award of the medal won by my proficiency, that my joy arose from knowing that it added a feather in the scale of those poor accomplishments which were to augment my salary—devoted to his future comforts!" Under circumstances most touching, the event took place; and these heroic daughters together tore themselves from the home where they hoped to re-assemble in more prosperous days. I cannot dwell upon the scene; I saw it not, save in her vivid

description; but I felt it to my heart's core.

Anne's destination was England. Hither she came, and with earnest assiduity applied herself to the task of tuition. Her uncommon acquirements insured a handsome salary, and joyously did she calculate on the service it would render to her father—how fondly she loved that father cannot be conceived even by this act of self-surrender—how agonizing was her trial, is known alone to Him, who in mysterious wisdom sent a stroke so sudden, that all the frantic haste that poor Anne could make to her distant home availed not to show her more than the mound that covered her father's new made grave.

The blow upon her tender heart was mortal. The struggles of her renewed spirit to sustain the load were wonderful: but they availed not. Back she returned to her post; for though the beloved parent was gone, there were others now cast especially on her to provide for. It was soon after her return that, finding I was in her vicinity, and doing justice to the love which I bear her dear country, she left her card at my door, inscribed with her name, and the brief addition, "an Irishwoman." We soon met; and I could not but marvel at the strength of the mutual affection that seemed, even from the first moment, to unite us. To me she was a treasure: her simple, sweet, undeviating trust in the Lord Jesus, her quiet submission under the heavy afflictions laid on her, the clear, realizing view which she took of spiritual things, and her habitual reference to the Lord's will in even the most minute matters—all rendered her a continual study to me, for my own humiliation and profit. In the excess of her love for dear Ireland I could fully sympathize: and in the cherished remembrance of scenes gone by, and loved ones lost, I found one who could indeed most deeply sympathize with me. The inexhaustible stores of her mind, her fine taste, accurate judgment, and delicate sense of honour, were beautiful to contemplate. Of the last she gave a touching proof: for when, smitten suddenly by a paralytic affection through the intenseness of her mental struggles, she expected instant or speedy death, she made a powerful effort to com-

mit to the flames all my letters and little notes. Often had I expressed to her my abhorrence of the want of principle and feeling exhibited in the too-common practice of exposing private letters, whether of the living or the dead; denouncing the former as base and treacherous—the latter as doubly treacherous and doubly base. She laid it to heart: and even at that awful moment collected her bewildered faculties to secure, as she afterwards told me, my little billets from falling into any other hands. I know she dearly prized them, even as I now treasure her beautiful letters to me; and it was a striking evidence at once of delicacy and fidelity, which few, perhaps, would imitate, because not many possess that exquisite sense of which she was continually giving proofs. If I know of one among my many friends who could be capable of publishing to the world the unstudied effusions of epistolary intercourse, I should turn from that individual with a bitter regret that ever we became acquainted. The act of Anne S. was no more than strict integrity demanded, as she herself observed to me,—yet would every Christian have viewed the duty, and fulfilled it like her? I fear not.

It pleased the Lord to raise her up from this attack, so far as to admit of her return to Ireland, with a fair prospect of ultimate recovery. Our parting interview cannot be effaced from my recollection. She was unable to attend the ordinances of God's house, and her affectionate pastor administered to her, four days before her departure hence, the comfortable institution of our dying Lord. I was the privileged partaker; and precious to my soul is the remembrance of that hour! As she lay upon the couch, her tall slender form, wrapped in the sable weeds of deepest mourning, her altered, but ever eloquent features wearing the expression of such perfect peace as I have rarely beheld on any countenance, her joined hands meekly resting on her bosom, pointing upwards, and the very tear that trembled on the lash of her closed eyes, withheld from falling, as though absorbed by a beam of holy joy, I felt that she was not a creature of earth—not destined long to sojourn among us: and though my heart selfishly ached at the prospect of my loss, I could not wish it otherwise.

Immediately after we were left alone, and while her thoughts still were evidently in heaven, she drew forth from a little pocket book the dearest relic she possessed—a pair of bands, just as they had been worn by her beloved parent in his last ministrations; and a lock of silvery hair. Not one word accompanied the action; nor was it needed; her tears burst forth; but with a solemn awe-struck expression she lifted her eyes to heaven, and they were stayed. And when I whispered, "It is but a little, a very little while, and you darling, will be rejoicing too before the throne where he now his," her whole countenance glowed with delight, as she repeated "A very, very little while." We parted, and the Lord only knows with what feelings of lingering affection the farewell was again and again renewed. She went: a stormy passage brought her to a quiet haven in her own sweet isle; and very soon was her soul at anchor in the calm and beauteous harbour of eternal rest.

It was not expected: she was apparently recovering, and all looked as bright as to the bereaved hearts of that orphaned family earthly things could look. Anne had supplied a mother's place to them: and to see her once more among them was almost like the return of a parent from the dead. But her gentle heart was broken: she had drunk the cup—she had fought the good fight, had finished her course, had kept the faith, and her crown was ready. She rose one morning, dressed herself, and then, overcome by fatigue, lay down on her bed, and was heard to say, "My heavenly Father's hour is come." After an interval, the word "Peace, peace," was softly and repeatedly breathed from lips on which the spirit of peace and law of kindness had ever dwelt. She fell asleep as it seemed: and a sleep it was, in Jesus, from which the body should no more awake till the voice of the Archangel calls it from the grave, a glorious thing, to be re-united to the rejoicing soul.

I wander now along the paths where we have walked, recalling with melancholy delight her animated looks, her powerful thoughts, and the elegant language in which she clad them: or I sit in the very place where her countenance used to shine

upon my laborious, and somewhat painful hours, remembering the pang that often shot across her speaking features, betraying the grief within, until I can rejoice, disinterestedly, fully rejoice in the assurance that she sorrows no more, but follows in his heavenly pastures, the Lamb, whom so sweetly she followed in the path of suffering below. I cannot but miss her, while the bursting foliage of spring restores to my pleasant haunts the aspect that we together delighted to behold: and I never shall be able to set my foot upon the fair pale flower profusely spread in the path. I must watch its growth: and when in its blooming prime it falls beneath the mower's scythe on some bright day, to be gathered into the storehouse for winter provision, I shall love it better still. For though "the grass withereth, the flower fadeth," it is but to place in more sublime contrast that which "shall stand for ever." And this peculiar species, lovely and pleasant in life, becomes more valuable when cut down; ministering nourishment to God's creatures. Even so, my beloved Anne S., who rendered many an hour delightful while the warm pulse of her affectionate heart sent life and animation through her frame, now when that quiet frame moulders in dust, yields food to my soul, while, contemplating her faith, her patience, her endurance and ever-glowing love, I behold the fruits of a real union with Christ, the living Vine, and long to follow her, even as she followed the Saviour here; that like her I may at last attain to the blessedness laid up in Him for all who believe. For He has said, "whosoever believeth in me hath eternal life;" and "the word of our God shall stand forever."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE HAWTHORN.

THERE are particular seasons when memory presents the images of days and things gone by with a reality most overpowering: when a long succession of years is made to wear the aspect of a dream; and we awake again in the society

that we best loved, and from which we scarcely seem in reality to have been separated. I know not how this may affect the individual whose days have glided pleasantly along, no precious ties discovered, no howling tempest let loose upon his path, no piercing thorns laid there to wound his feet: but the shadow of a quiet home held over him, and the smile of domestic love always ready to sweeten his needful portion of this life's bitters. I do know its touching power where all this has been reversed; where home, sweet, native home, has never been resisted, since the almost daily sight of such friends added brightness to its very sunshine; nor have those friends been met since home, dear home, was deserted. I know what it is, when years of varied trial have been so prolonged that the girl and the stripling of those times can show their daughters and their sons grown up almost to their own stature; and to indifferent eyes, a change has passed upon all, well nigh sufficient to destroy personal identity. But though the eye admits a change, the heart does not. Its language is, "This is the same, the very same, the youthful guest my father loved to welcome, the chosen companion of my brother's sportive hours, the associate of many a sunshiny day, the abetter of many a mirthful scheme—in one word, a part and parcel of my own, my early home." Upon that English monosyllable, more perhaps has been said and sung, written and recited, than on any other word in the language; but when all is added up together, it falls far short in eloquent description, of what is contained in a single smile, in one look of cordial recognition, from an old, and dear, and long-lost friend of our early home.

It seems strange that where all the dispensations of God's providence, however mysterious, and seemingly severe, are not only known and acknowledged, but *felt* to have been working together for good, and where no possible portion of unmixed and prolonged earthly happiness would bribe the believer to become again what he was in those by-gone years, their recollection should be still so very sweet, so very precious to the heart. Yet it is in full accordance with the spirit of our just and comprehensive form of thanksgiving, where we bless our heavenly Father, "for our

creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life." Even in the days of spiritual darkness and thankless alienation from God, his hand was over us for good: he caused his sun to shine, and his rain to fall, for our enjoyment: and, in the eternal purposes of his saving mercy to the objects of redeeming love, as in the case of Cyrus, he girded us, although we did not know him. I cannot think that there is anything displeasing to God, or injurious to spiritual feeling, in thus cherishing the memory of the past: sure I am that it is calculated to stir us up to earnest, mutual prayer, one for another; and when we think on the many who are taken, the few who survive, the number of years that have slipped by unimproved, and the awful uncertainty of what remains, we cannot stifle the solemn call to "work while it is called to-day: for the night cometh."

Night has indeed come—has fallen at noon—on some whose morning was as cloudless and as sweet as that of the loveliest day in spring. It cannot be that I should now refrain from once more reverting to the dearest recollection of my heart, to one who was so truly a sharer in all its thoughts, its troubles and its joys, that when, as now, the picture, or rather the reality of those early days has been vividly held up to my sight, it seems a marvel to me that I should be enabled to acquiesce in the dispensation that so abruptly removed him. A long and anxious quest among the hawthorn hedges, even in the sunniest spots, sent me back unsuccessful. The flower of May had not ventured to expose its delicate and fragile clusters to so uncongenial an atmosphere; but though the disappointment saddened me, I am content that the flower of May should become a flower of June; and the simple chaplet long since chosen to commemorate the day of his birth, be transferred by a short delay, to honour the day of his death.

I like not the indiscriminate application of that word:—where the sting of death is taken away, its character is changed. How beautiful is the expression used in reference to Stephen—"And when he had thus spoken, he fell asleep." The dissolution of the body, after the spirit has left it, becomes needful; and there is mercy, seldom considered or acknow-

ledged, in what we naturally abhor to think of. Did the body remain entire, we could not, at this period of the world, strike a spade into the ground without invading the sanctuary of its ghastly inhabitants; and every populous place must, after a few generations, be deserted from mere want of space wherein to deposit them, with any regard to the common feelings of decency and natural respect. Terrible, indeed, and horrible would be the penal sentence, if, in returning to the dust, the body did not also become dust. Some, to be sure can so far afford and contrive to evade the common doom, as to brick up their departed friends in vaults, a miserable exemption to the general rule. At least, so I regard it; I prefer a sanctuary that is inviolable, because altogether undiscoverable, save to the eye of God alone. His people "fall asleep," and then, if man interpose not, he "hides them," by a wonderful process, where none can find them again, until at the great consummation of all things, in the exquisitely sublime words of Job, which the believer may confidently take up, "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." Yes I love to think that in putting the mortal remains of a precious object into the ground, I do especially commit them to the Lord, allowing him to work his wondrous and gracious will, unmaking what he made; re-uniting it with the element from which it was taken, and reserving to himself the glory of gathering again such particles as shall enter into the formation of the spiritual body, from what was the habitation of the soul during its former stage of existence. I sometimes think that very few do really and rightly believe in that splendid miracle, the *resurrection* of the body: the actual rising again of the body which is buried: the appearance of men in their bodies before the judgment-seat of Christ. It is too wonderful for us; we cannot attain unto it: but we are not therefore excused from believing it.

This blossom—this cluster of flowers, each robed in delicate white, with a faint blush of equally delicate rose-colour, and studded with a perfect grove of graceful stamens, breathing a fragrance deliciously in unison with its exquisite appearance—

this hawthorn blossom—whence came it? Last year, a mound of clay was piled up along the side of the field, to form a bank, into which was inserted a row of as unsightly sticks as could well be seen: and I know that at the root of the stick decomposition took place, and nothing was there but black earth, cold damps, and vegetable corruption. Yet it can be proved to demonstration that from them arose this object, glorious in the perfection of visible beauty, without a trace of the combination of disagreeable things whence it sprang. I know that instrumentally the sun in the firmament, and the balmy air of spring, wrought the change: and shall I concede to the weak creatures of an Almighty Hand, a power which I deny to that unrestrained Omnipotence? No, most lovely preacher; my heart is not so closed against the delicious promise, illustrated by such a type; and while the Lord in his word says to me, "Thy brother shall rise again," no less surely does he, in his work, show me that what shall rise is the same in very deed, yet with a body given to it of the glory of which we can form no more conception than he who had never beheld a flower could have formed of what should spring from the stick thrust into the ground last year.

With this in prospect, I can venture, yea, delight to look back; and while fondly dwelling on the early scenes of our thoughtless days, can say of each, it was a link in the chain of endless mercies wrought by everlasting love. If the strength of undivided affection adds a pang to the keen sense of irreparable loss, still the good far overbalances the evil. It led to willing service and to fervent prayer, while either could avail him; it infuses zeal and perseverance into duties fulfilled for his sake, and in his stead, towards objects once most dear to his heart. There is scarcely a recollection interwoven with the flower of May that does not furnish an encouragement, and feed the hope which maketh not ashamed, by opening more and more the faithfulness of him who hath promised. Is the contemplation one of early enjoyment, unmingled with a tear, unchecked by a frown, when all went well with me even as, in the blindness of the natural heart, I desired it to be? I read in that retro-

spection the necessity for subsequent chastisement, and learn to adore the love that followed me through every perverse and wilful track, applying the scourge, until the wanderer, brought home to the fold, desired to stray no more. Does the image of my companion rise before me, in all the countless combinations that cannot be forgotten? I ponder on the mercy that watched and warded every danger and led him through the successive battle fields of a protracted warfare, untouched by hostile arm, while many a comrade fell before his eyes, and armies were mowed down beside him. A work was to be wrought in him, and God would glorify himself, alike by prolonging life in the midst of hourly perils, and by terminating it in the moment of peace and security. The artist's skill is never so highly appreciated as when he has succeeded in portraying an object beloved by ourselves: should not the glorious workmanship of the Most High call forth a song of louder praise, when his renewing power has stamped with the impress of immortal life a soul naturally dear to us as our own? We should not hear so many idle changes rung on the perverted word idolatry, as applied to the indulgence of our natural affection—or, at least, we should not so much heed them,—if we marked the stimulus thereby given to intercessory prayer, and thankful acknowledgment on behalf of our brethren. "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!" was the ejaculation of parental love; and at the end of more than thirty-six centuries we see the still unconquered Arab enjoying the fulfilment of God's gracious answer to that prayer.

Fearfully and wonderfully made as we are in every respect, there is nothing more astonishing to me than the phenomena of memory. An event occurs, or a remark is made, and for years the circumstance is forgotten; it seems to be utterly blotted out, and consigned to oblivion, but it remains, with all its associations, so faithfully preserved that when unexpectedly recalled it comes not alone—it brings a host of touching recollections, aggravating, perhaps, the bitterness of loss, while it soothes the bereaved bosom by adding to its store of ideal treasures, and melancholy delights. The only things that we

seem able utterly to forget are God's mercies and our own sins; for all besides, we have a ready place in that amazing organ, memory.

I cannot put the hawthorn blossom by for any flower that blows. Its very profusion endears it, meeting me in every path with a joyous smiling aspect, like that which it commemorates; and marking the most beautiful season of the year, and disappearing when all seems to promise a long reign of flowers. And what shall supply its place? The wild-rose of the edge is fair, but too evanescent; the straggling honey-suckle is sweet, but it wants the sprightly grace of the May-flower. I must not repine, surrounded by so many varied gifts of the same bounteous hand, because one is taken away: but though I may not repine, I cannot forget. The Lord gave, and I blessed his name for it: he resumed the boon, and I was able to bless him for that also, because I knew it to be best, since he willed it; and I knew also that he took away, not cast away, the treasure of my heart. It was not scattered to the wind like the petals of a flower, but gathered into the garner as winnowed wheat, reserved for the Master's use. Can we look abroad upon this world of storms, and regret that our harvest is safely housed? Can we hear the frequent voice of sorrow and sighing and lament that some beloved object has gained the place where they are compelled to flee away? The ripening berries of the hawthorn bush, reserved as a winter store to feed the little birds of heaven, read a lesson from the very stalks where those sweet blossoms smiled. They tell me of a nobler purpose in the works of God than selfish man would appoint: and the small portion of his ways that we may now discern is but a part of that vast and uniform design which shall, hereafter, be fully unfolded, to the joy of his people and the glory of his name.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE YELLOW BROOM.

AMONG the many truths to which it would be our wisdom and happiness to
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pay more regard than we do, is this: that every thing has its bright side—sin only excepted. Within the range of a small neighbourhood, often of a single family, we meet with individuals whose mode of viewing the ordinary occurrences of life is so dissimilar, as often to invest the same event or circumstance with two characters, as distinct as sunshine and gloom. A naturally cheerful and sanguine temper will find in almost every thing somewhat to be pleased with; a truly spiritual one something for which to be thankful: and when both are united, the joyousness that abounds is delightful—to its possessor at least—while the command, so hard to some mourning spirits, "Rejoice always," is anything but a grievous one. A cold, dreary, leafless spring, succeeded by a sudden burst of summer, is a fruitful theme to those whose favourite point of view is not the fairest side. "Here we are transferred at once from the rough blasts of the north-easter to hot scorching rays, without any gradations of temperature. No spring showers, no light and genial zephyrs, no succession of plants in their season, but a rude, abrupt jump from the muffs and boas of February to the gauzes of July. How miserable!" So sighs one portion of the gentle community; while the other exclaims, "What a rare collection of sweets and beauties seldom grouped together! The lilac and laburnum mingling their blossoms with the rose. Spring has worn a sombre mantle, only that her younger sister might sparkle for once doubly gay in her borrowed gems. We are like voyagers, wafted on with unconscious rapidity from a frigid to a genial clime, forgetting in the brilliant beams around us the shivering discomfort of last week; or only remembering it to enhance the delight of basking beneath such a sky." Which of these parties is the wiser, it might be presumptuous to decide: but the latter unquestionably is the more happy.

Not far from my cottage door grows a shrub, or rather a tree, of sunny character and beautiful aspect, on which I cannot look and be sad. It is one of the many graceful things that spring up, spontaneously, in the wilder tracks of our English garden; and the person who can pass it by unnoticed is more difficult to please than I am. The Broom, with its irregu-

lar stem, its capricious twists, and wild, straggling shoots, thrown out, as it were at random, yet never failing to form a wand of striking elegance, marked by the small, but exquisitely-shaped blossom of deeply shaded yellow—this Broom seems quite a character among the trees; and when I study that character, I find its prominent points to be independence, decision, vigour, and a beauty alike profuse, unique, and eccentric. Let it be remembered I am not speaking of a shrub, such as the gardener permits, here and there, to attain a certain height for the diversifying of his well-tutored array: but of a tree, some eight or nine feet high, rampant in healthful freedom, and stooping with patriarchal dignity to touch my head as I pass below.

The Yellow Broom was always a favourite with me; and all its associations were sunshiny like its blossom. They are not the less so now, that, having found a very fitting antitype for it, I am obliged to look far beyond the tops of much higher trees towards his present abode. His memory will, indeed, bring a tear to the eye, but never unaccompanied with a smile from the gladdened heart. What he was to me and hundreds more, can never be forgotten by us: what he is in the full enjoyment of all that his soul long panted after, forms a contemplation most delicious to those who know how in this tabernacle he groaned, being burdened. Burdened with much suffering from bodily infirmity: with more anguish of spirit, from the clearness of his views on the subject of England's waning star. It would be idle to throw a flimsy veil over the person alluded to: unworthy of the name of Howels, to shrink from inscribing it, even on this humble page.

I had a dread of running after popular preachers, and was also, in some measure, infected by prejudices, the holders of which, like myself, knew not the man whom they dispraised. Accordingly, my first visit to Long-acre chapel was made rather in compliance with the usage of the family whose guest I then was, than from choice. It so happened that in the morning's discourse he uttered a sentiment at once so just and so little calculated to flatter his hearers, that it completely riveted my attention. He said that of all characters, he knew none more deeply to be

commiserated than a young man of piety, talent, and eloquence, placed in one of the metropolitan pulpits: for that surrounded by an admiring London congregation, and greeted with their applauding eulogies, he would soon find himself in the plight of a man embraced by a bear—crushed by the animal's deadly clasp, and stifled with its poisonous breath. "This minister," thought I, as the energetic denunciation reached me, "can hardly be in the habit of prophesying smooth things to his flock." I secretly wished that he would take up a subject on which I was, at the time, much exercised: the extraordinary proceedings then commencing among the followers of Mr. Irving. I was gratified: the untold wish was fulfilled; on that same evening Howels fully entered upon the question; and God made him the blessed means of so far settling my mind that, even under circumstances of peculiar trial and temptation, it never again wavered. The delusion was revealed under the strong light of opposing truth; and the snare so effectually broken that it could not be repaired.

From that time I cannot tax myself with having sought for other teaching, when Long-acre was within my reach. Many a walk have I taken, of three or four miles, through all the varieties of an inclement winter, to partake of its good things: for I never deemed the privilege of his, or any other ministry, an excuse for entering a carriage on the Lord's day. I never added the weight of my body to the burdens so cruelly and unlawfully laid on cattle, to whom the Lord has graciously extended the boon of the seventh day's rest. For this I desire to be most thankful, for the temptation was certainly great; and there was no lack of plausible evasions, suggested by friends who, having persuaded themselves, would fain have persuaded me also, that they were guilty of no inconsistency in riding to church to hear God's prohibition against their so doing—nor of trifling with Him in prayer for grace to keep a law which they had made deliberate preparations for breaking within an hour afterwards.

I have alluded to the bodily sufferings of our valued pastor: they were great and grievous. If his flock had known what he sometimes underwent, while preparing their Sabbath feast, they would even have

preferred to remain unfed. But he was then—to use his own beautiful comparison, “an out-door servant, exposed to wind and rain.” Rough, indeed, were the gales that shook, and pitiless the torrents that overwhelmed that uncomplaining servant: and often, while his acknowledged singularities provoked the good-humoured smile, or furnished an excuse for the mocking laugh, in the many circles where he formed a frequent topic of discourse, the object of their free remarks was lying stretched out on the hard floor of his retired lodging, seeking, in that position, a temporary relief from racking pain, brought on by unreserved devotion to his duties,—efforts far beyond his physical strength—and pleading with God for their souls. Exquisitely alive to every touch, he writhed where another would not have winced from the rough contact of spirits less acutely sensitive: while the unaffected lowliness of his character, joined with a delicacy that few could appreciate, threw a veil over feelings that a more common mind would have gloried in parading before men. Modern refinement sometimes questioned concerning him, as it does respecting the yellow Broom, whether a plant so simply natural, so meet to grace the wild heath, was adapted to shine among its fantastic selections: and similar was the result. The eye of true taste never failed to recognize in the one, as in the other, a cluster of living gold, not to be vied with by one of a hundred aspirants.

For this delicacy of body and susceptibility of mind the days in which my beloved friend shone as a light among us were too exciting. Within a short space of time, he saw the glory of his adored Redeemer sullied by the creeping in, to the very bosom of the church, of a heresy, alike subtle, seductive, and ruinous. To Howels it was horror unspeakable, it was anguish intolerable, to hear of a whisper breathed against the sinless nature of the holy, harmless, undefiled ONE, who was all his salvation, and all his desire. He entered not upon that controversy in the spirit of a theological disputant, coolly selecting his weapons to combat an error; but as a disciple, combining the love of John with the zeal of Peter, anxious to throw himself between his beloved Lord and the shame and spitting wherewith his

enemies assailed Him. The fiery torrent of awful reproof that sometimes burst from his lips on this subject was not the studied language of a well-stored head, but the overboiling of a heart inflamed with holy indignation, ready to exclaim, “The rebukes of them that rebuked Thee have fallen upon *me*.” How many his faithful and fervent exhortations were the means of preserving from that snare, cannot be computed; I can only answer for myself, that I was one for whom, in this respect, his labour was not in vain in the Lord.

But another cause—if it may be called another—was dear to him as his own soul; the cause of Christ, as involved in the Protestantism of our country. His peculiar gift might be said to be the discerning of spirits: he could detect Antichrist under any disguise, and never failed to expose and denounce him, whether appearing as the open denier of our blessed Lord’s proper divinity, or as the more specious impugner of his spotless humanity. But the papal Antichrist was never out of his keen view. Whatever prey his vigilant mind had started to run down, that great mystery of iniquity could not escape. The very soul of John Philpot, or of Rowland Taylor, seemed to have passed into his body: and when the flagon of England’s growing iniquity was replenished from the golden cup of the accursed harlot, received into a God-defying alliance with our ungrateful, apostatizing state, it is well known that Howels’ life nearly fell a sacrifice to the intensity of his grief and indignation; and when he had so far subdued the bitterness of excited feelings as to venture on an allusion in the pulpit to what was then past recall, those who heard him, and they alone, might form some judgment as to his anticipations of what should follow upon that flagrant national sin. I cannot dwell on this subject, for it burns my very heart, even as it burnt his: but this I may say, that if, through the good hand of my God upon a most weak and worthless instrument, these poor pages are ever made serviceable to the sacred cause of Protestantism, I would desire to thank Him, that in the order of his providential dispensations he sent me to sit under the ministry of his dear servant, William Howels. The principle had indeed taken very deep

and strong root in my mind before I was thus privileged: but at Long-acre was the lesson learned of a bold, unhesitating, uncompromising avowal before men and in despite of man, of my own convictions. To the very last did our teacher maintain his loud protest against the abomination that maketh desolate, standing where it ought not: and I pray for grace, at my humble distance, so to follow his example, that power to wield a pen may be vouchsafed to me no longer than while that pen is guided to bring before the eyes of my beloved countrywomen the exceeding iniquity of even a tacit connivance at the rapid overspread of that desolating abomination. Howels does not now lament that he wrought so diligently, bearing the burden and heat of the day: the in-door servant, housed and sheltered, and caressed in his Lord's presence, regrets not that he met the blast, and bided the pelting storm while tending the flock on a dreary waste.

Decision is a noble thing: it formed the crown of Howels' character. His sole object was to glorify God, and a more decided course no man could take than he did in pursuit of that object. My yellow Broom-tree seems resolved to rise as high, to spread as wide, and to put forth as many blossoms as it possibly can. To this is owing its dissimilarity from the more timid shrubs of its extensive race. It is not, I grant, so well drilled as they, nor so trim in outer aspect; but it is a tree, while they are only bushes—it shelters my head, when they can but please the eye: and compels me, whenever I gaze on it, to look towards heaven. Alas! how often do we stop short of that mark, when delighting in the plants we love. Even Howels had those among his constant hearers to whom his eloquence afforded an intellectual feast, without reaching their hearts, or influencing their lives; and how many whose consciences bear them testimony that such was not their case, have to lament, with me, over their comparative unfruitfulness, while tended and watered by his careful hand! We were sometimes accused of idolizing him, just as I am taxed with making an idol of my garden. It is untrue: like the beautiful flowers and juicy fruits, we received him as a gift from God! but we

did not prize him half enough, nor were within any measure so thankful as we ought to have been. He brought us a message, and left it, though like a shadow, the beloved messenger departed from our sight. We shall yet know more fully than now we do that there hath been a prophet among us. The Lord mercifully spared him the anguish of witnessing the rapid fulfilment of his own reluctant predictions. He saw the cloud, when no bigger than a man's hand—the hand that signed away our national faith—and knew that the sky would shortly be overcast, and a torrent descend, not to refresh a parched land, but to deluge and ravage a guilty one. He girded up his loins, and was taken away from the evil to come, to a place where the joyousness of his unfettered spirit knows no cloud, no doubt, no fear; where he dives unchecked into the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; and sees, what before he was enabled to believe, how in despite of Satan and his thousand wiles, all things are working together for the glory of his heavenly king, and the good of those who love Him.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE WIDOW'S TALE.

To write on Flowers appears no difficult task when the whole earth teeming with them presents one gorgeous carpet of rich dyes and exquisite design. On the present occasion it is only difficult from the overpowering emotion that accompanies the contemplation—the bewildering delight with which I look abroad upon the glowing scene. The flowers are scattered around me in wild profusion, always sweet, always pleasant to my eye: how much more so now, when every one that I look on has its root fixed in the green sod of dear Erin, and the welcome, which they smile upon me is the "*cead-mille-failthe*" of that hospitable land! Years have rolled by in lengthened exile, until I verily thought I was never more to gaze upon her fair fields, never more to taste the balmy breath of her zephyrs—but,

thrown at a long distance, to love her and to work for her alone. It is not so. I am feasting in all the luxury that my heart can desire: her magnificent mountains rise before me, in endless gradations of height, form, and distance, shutting me in, as it were, a most willing captive, dreading nothing but deliverance from my beautiful prison. The long hedge-row stretches away where the golden furze retains many a cluster of bright blossoms, intermingled with a profusion of honeysuckle, wild-roses, and the ever-precious flower of May, which seems to have lingered thus long to add an endearment to my welcome. The stately fox-glove rising from the bank below, intersperses its rich depth of tint, while the smaller flowers that lie basking in the beam actually defy enumeration. Then the pure, cold, emerald green, mantling the earth beyond; the lovely abundance of delicate foliage in some wooded spots, the deep, steady flow of the majestic Slaney, as it widens towards the sea; the mighty relics of sterner days, frowning, even in ruin, defiance from their rocky heights; all these, and much more have combined to fill my spirit with an enjoyment that derives its highest zest from the consciousness that it is upon Erin my eye rests, and the tear of delight that often dims it, springs from a source unknown to any but those, who have learned to love and to mourn over her as I have done.

Alas! who can love her, and not mourn? Ireland is, in natural beauty, the garden of Eden: in the spiritual desolation of her native race, a howling wilderness. Look on the former, and all is harmonious loveliness, towering sublimity, unequalled grace: examine the latter, and your heart will quail before the horrors of that midnight gloom which wraps the souls and perverts the minds of her children. I speak of those who lie beneath the yoke of bondage, beguiled by the mystery of iniquity; the miserable tools of an incendiary priesthood, taught to saturate the earth which bears them with the blood of their best friends, and to resist, as an intolerable evil, the only sure means of their temporal and eternal welfare.

The tales that are told of scenes yet fresh in the memory of some in almost every village are harrowing: and, in illus-

tration of this, I will relate a story, exactly as I received it on the spot where the event occurred. It has added another to my reminiscences, calculated to stir up the most sluggish spirit on behalf of these deluded beings whom the present policy of infatuated England is delivering over, in ten-fold helplessness and hopelessness, to the grasp of the destroyer.

I had long wished to visit the spot, where through God's mercy, the terrible rebellion of the year 1798 was stayed, though at a fearful cost of life; and the priest-led troops of insurgents utterly routed had abandoned the field, never again to assemble in any force. It was a lovely morning that my wish was gratified, and we started for Vinegar-hill. The road, wild and rough, lay through a beautiful track of country, diversified with mountain, field, and grove, to almost all of which belonged some tale of blood. At one spot it was remarkable, displaying to the left a field completely overspread with Heartsease, the little innocent flower smiling sweetly to the sun, while, on the right, beneath the shade of a few trees, stood a solitary tomb, the tenant of which had been there murdered and buried. His only offence was Protestantism. It was here that one of my companions related the circumstances of the widow's tale which I am about to repeat: and at my request he took me straightway to her cottage, where, while her aged cheek burned with the fever of excited feelings, and the tear that would start seemed to be dried in the glow of her bitter indignation, she confirmed, in her own energetic language, the history of her terrible sufferings.

She was the mother of nine living children, and in present expectation of giving birth to the fourteenth of her offspring, when the town where she lived was taken possession of by the rebel force. The husband, a loyal Protestant, fell into their hands, and was conveyed to Vinegar-hill, hard by. Thither she followed to seek him; and hearing a simultaneous shot, in a place where some hundreds of the rebels formed a ring, she broke at once through it, and found a man, seemingly lifeless, extended on the ground—it was her husband; and the discharge that she had heard was the deliberate act of cold-

blooded murder. She threw herself upon the bleeding body, in time to receive the last farewell of her husband, who immediately expired. When the first agony of her grief had a little subsided, she humbly begged the corpse of its butchers, but was refused, and threatened with a similar fate, unless she made the sign of the cross, after their fashion, in token of renouncing her faith: but no menace could prevail upon her to do this. Several priests came forward, trying every method of persuasion and intimidation, but all was vain. She then requested of them, as the greatest mercy they could show, to bring her nine children, to put them to death with her, and to throw all their bodies into the same pit. However, they drove her away; and after a long watch, seeing them disperse, she returned to the spot where she found her husband still lying, cold and stiff: she then hastened back to the town, in search of a carriage; but all her efforts could not procure a horse, nor any animal to draw the car which a neighbour allowed her to take from his shed. She waited till nightfall, then took her three eldest boys and two girls, and by hard labour, three pulling and three pushing the car, they got it to the top of the hill, placed the murdered body in it, and managing the yet more difficult descent, conveyed the husband and father to his desolate home, where they could indulge the agony of their hearts over the mutilated remains.

But, among the Irish poor, nothing is deemed so important as a burial: to let a friend remain uncoffined is, in their sight, a heinous sin. The wretched widow again sallied forth, and sought by every means to procure a coffin: it was impossible—no one could have dared to make it for such a purpose, however well inclined; for the rebel force was encamped on the hill, and had unresisted possession of the town. Love, however, would not be baffled, when the dearest object of its devotion called for the last service that could be rendered; she looked about, and at last fixed on the best piece of furniture she possessed, a settle-bed, so formed as to afford a couch by night, a seat by day. She brought an axe, chopped off the legs and other appendages of the bedstead, and leaving only what supplied a sort of chest, to hold the bedding when not in use, she

there deposited the body, carefully closed it down, and at midnight, assisted by her children, all of whom were young, she got the box upon the car, moved it on as before by their united strength, and conveying it to the Protestant burying-ground, they there dug a grave, and under the gloomy sky of midnight, not daring even to let a plaint be heard, they laid the precious burthen down in its silent habitation, filled up the space, and returned to find their little cottage completely occupied by the rebel troops, who called the exhausted and heart-broken mourners to cook their food, and attend on them.

This event could hardly have been forgotten under any circumstances; but it appears that, not more than three months ago, one of the family being buried, the grave was dug on the precise spot where the murdered man had been laid: and the old settle-bed was found, after the lapse of thirty-nine years, in such preservation as to identify it at once. I cannot doubt that to this circumstance was attributable some of the deep and vivid feeling of the old woman, who seemed to dwell upon the recital as of a thing of yesterday. I could not but, in my heart, re-echo her fervent expressions of attachment to the cause in which she had suffered so bitterly, but I spoke to her of the forgiving love of Christ, and sought to win her from the poignancy of her recollections, probably with little success: and when, almost immediately afterwards, I found myself labouring up the difficult ascent where she and her poor children had forced the car along, I could not but marvel at the force of that affection, surviving the life of its object, and braving the sanguinary vengeance of a jealous foe, to achieve what seemed almost an impossibility. The hill is very steep, much interspersed with rock; and on its summit is a perfect ridge of that substance, rising to a considerable height, and affording on its flat termination a fine post for overlooking both the town and the surrounding country for many a long mile. To the right of this ridge stands a ruin, formerly a windmill, of which only a dilapidated tower of brick-work remains. This was perfect in 1798, and contained two stories; it was used as a prison for the wretched captives, who were brought forth and piked, or shot, as the vengeance and

caprice of the rebels, directed by their wicked priests, dictated. The spot where they fell and were buried was pointed out to me; and there, in great profusion, I found a most beautiful pigmy race of flowers, adhering to the stones that occupy the soil, and bearing beneath their rich and creamy petals a sanguine blush too nearly allied to the harrowing recollections of the scene. I never saw this exquisite little blossom in such surpassing loveliness as on the grave of those victims; not fewer than twenty varieties of small and beautiful wild flowers might be gathered from among the heath and moss and rugged grass of that hill of slaughter—itsself by no means large, among the mountains of Wexford; and when I looked around me, and followed out the long extent of smiling landscape, unmarked by a scar, and again glanced at the fairy blossoms that actually gemmed the rock beneath my feet, the swell of indignant sorrow became almost intolerable, to think that through the cruel neglect of those who held in their possession for nearly three hundred years an unfettered bible, poor Ireland has seen the blood of her children shed on every side, while their souls went down in darkness to the pit of destruction.

It is futile to attempt an evasion of the charge. The blessings of the reformation have never yet been extended to Ireland. Our second Henry invaded the land under an express commission from the man of sin, at Rome, to darken the light which then shone upon it, and reduce it to the state of vassalage from which it alone, among the nations, was exempt. I have looked on the mighty fortresses that he built, to establish his progressive sway: and on their cotemporary churches, erected for the idol-worship of Rome, and crumbling into decay, without one proclamation of Gospel truth having been made within their walls. I know that the curse was planted here seven centuries back, by English invaders; and here I find it flourishing in hateful luxuriance, while the hands that would uproot it hang down, and knees that would hasten to the work wax feeble, through the lack of that encouragement which England at her peril withholds—yea, she smiles upon the deadly evil, fosters it as a desirable thing, and with daring hand deals “a heavy

blow” at protestantism, which shall recoil upon her with a force to lay her proudest honours in the dust, unless she speedily repent. The Lord has wonderfully blessed the efforts of his servants who, individually, came to the help of poor Ireland against her foes; and they will find it no small matter to have cleared their own souls from the blood of this people; and to be found with His mark on their foreheads when the day of national vengeance comes; but it is a fearful thing to look abroad upon a population of many millions of immortal creatures, and to see six-eighths of the whole number delivered over to Satan, in the persons of his most active delegates, while the little remnant who have escaped the yoke are as sheep appointed to be slain at the first word of havoc from those to whom mercy and peace are alike unknown.

This land of beauty was once the land of saints: she shone as bright in piety and learning as still she shines in natural loveliness and splendor. Who darkened the star? Oh, it is an awful question; for we allow the deeds of our fathers if we seek not by every means to remove the veil which they cast over her heart. Could I bring the Christian ladies of England to see what I am now surveying—the struggles of a persecuted and impoverished church to gather into her folds the little ones from among the lost sheep of poor Erin—could I show them the works of mercy and love, laborious and long-suffering patience, carried on beneath the roofs of some village school that owes its existence to the self-denying generosity of a pastor whose lawful dues are withheld, and his home and life left at the mercy of those who hate him for his love to their souls—surely those Christian ladies would suffer the word of exhortation yet again, to abound more and more in the work of helping forward the cause of God in this land.

This little Stonecrop that I brought away, a touching memento of the widow's tale, will flourish, I hope, in my garden, a perpetual preacher to quicken me in the service of its native land: for I cannot look upon it and forget the hill of slaughter; or cease to remember that the power which deluged it in innocent blood still exists unchanged and unchangeable, ga-

thering daily new strength for another outburst of exterminating hatred against Protestantism. I speak not this of the misguided individuals, who are of all persons most pitiable, and the blood of whose souls cries out against those who leave them to perish in their guilt; I speak of the sin, not of the sinner. Or, if of the latter, I allude to the wilful and wily deceivers, who lead them to destruction, and the unfaithful legislators who connive at it. The mightiest powers of earth and hell seem leagued to destroy this emerald gem of an island; but greater is he who is for her, than all that be against her. Midnight murder prowls round the base of her towering hills, watching its destined prey: but the mountain is full of horses and chariots of fire, guarding the Lord's devoted people. I weep, but I do not tremble: those who are hardening themselves against God will not prosper; those who drive their nefarious traffic in the souls of deluded men shall be put to shame and destroyed. The snare that is wrapped round this people will be broken, and Erin, "First flower of the earth," shall breathe the fragrance of accepted praise—"first gem of the sea," she shall once more sparkle in a light that cannot be quenched. The steadfast immovable labourers who abound in the Lord's works, cannot find their labour in vain in the Lord. He may try their faith and patience in a yet hotter furnace, but the blessing will come at last; though it tarry, we will wait for it; it will surely come, and not tarry. "Fear not O land; rejoice and be glad, for the Lord will do great things."

CHAPTER XXVI.

BUDDING.

It has often struck me, that the main defect of modern preaching and writing, as compared with those of earlier times, consists in overlooking too much the great point of union with Christ. To dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, is the believer's privilege: it is the very principle of his life. Without such union he enjoys no

membership, but is, however he may flatter and delude himself, a stranger to the covenant of promise, without God, and without hope. Accordingly, we find in the ministrations and theological treatises of the old school a continual reference to this vital point; while the productions of private Christians of the same standing show the effect of being thus perpetually put in remembrance of it. I do not mean to say that nothing of the sort is to be met with in our day; but the instances of such preaching are not very frequent; and among God's people I meet with many perplexing questions, many doubtful disputations, the origin of which I can trace to a very dim perception of this great truth, and a forgetfulness of it in the ordinary affairs of life.

It was remarked a short time ago by a noble and revered friend in whose family worship I was privileged to join, and who was expounding to his household the eighteenth Psalm, that the scripture which they were considering must be taken in a threefold application: the words were spoken by David, in his own character, they are spoken by Christ, through the mouth of David; and they may be spoken by the poorest, the weakest believer, in virtue of his covenant union with Christ. This, and many similar observations uttered at the same time, led me again to reflect on the unfrequency of what I know to be the words of truth and soberness, among Christians: and sent me into the garden to seek illustrations of a doctrine so important; for I well knew that they abounded there.

The most striking representation had lately been presented to my sight in a specimen of the art of budding, carried to a singular extent. I had seen a Rose tree of immense growth, bearing in full beauty more than twenty varieties of that exquisite flower. From the deep crimson tint, and rich velvet petals of the damask, to the pale, drooping, transparent sickliness of the feeblest China rose, every gradation of hue, texture, and form was to be found thriving on one parent stem. Viewed apart, each was a rose, fair and fragrant: collectively, they formed an object of surpassing splendour; radiant with beauty, and breathing an atmosphere of perfume. Beneath the profusion of clustering leaves and shining flowers, the stem that sup-

ported them was unseen; but well I knew that, apart from that stem, not one of them could continue to exist. They had been culled from different families, severed from their natural stock, and made partakers together in that from which, and from each other, they were before aliens: but to remove them again—to regraft the expanded flower into the stem whence the bud had first been extracted, was an utter impossibility: they must remain or perish.

Who could contemplate this, and not remember the Rose of Sharon? who could pursue the contemplation without feeling anew the importance of that union by which we, wild and thorny flowers in our original state, are made partakers of his root and fatness, preserved in life, and nourished unto growth, not to our praise and glory, but to his own. I fancied the brambles and wild briars on a neighbouring common calling to one of these bright roses, "Come, and dwell among us, for a while! impart to us of your sap and fragrance; and it may be that we also shall learn to bloom even as you." The reply must have been, "Not so: of myself I have nothing to impart: I live but while I grow upon this stem, and the uttermost that I can do for you is to bear testimony, that if like me, you become a partaker in its vitality, you shall bloom as I do. We cannot come to you; come you to us."

Now this is just what I want continually to apply to myself; and I have met with examples no less lovely, no less eloquent, among God's children than among the flowers that he has given us, to teach while they adorn our path. One I will single, who, for brightness and attractiveness might vie with the richest damask rose upon the tree, whose nearest connections and most endeared associates were still moving in the sphere of worldliness; and whose professional advancement almost depended upon his making some concession to their demands; but the Lord gave him so to feel his dependance on, and his union with Christ that he was proof against the united pleadings of interest and personal attachment: he kept himself unspotted from the world. When solicited to mix in general society, under the plea that his example would produce a salutary effect, his reply was much in the strain that I have fancied the Rose would adopt.

"I can no otherwise present an example to others than as Christ dwelling in me enables me, however feebly and imperfectly, to reflect and to exhibit his image to men; but to the promise of that indwelling grace is annexed a command to come out and be separate from what you desire me to mix myself up with. The very act of compliance would darken the light within; how then could I shine in company where Christ can have no place?" It was objected that the Lord, when on earth, went among sinners, and even ate with them. "True," he replied, "and if I am allowed at the dinner table to speak of the lost sheep, of the pieces of silver, and the prodigal son, I shall consider myself as doing my Master's work. But unless you can show that I am called to such scenes in order to utter such a testimony, I must decline appearing there." On one occasion I knew this text adduced, in support of a pressing invitation to dine where the pleasures of the table were much pursued, "A bishop should be a lover of hospitality." The answer was, that he was no bishop; but that if his friend would come and take a seat at his table, he hoped to be found not deficient in the duty of hospitality, though he could promise him neither a feast nor a party. Another pleader, inviting him to a mess-table, assailed him with Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and because of thine often infirmities." He could not forbear laughing when he read the note; and answered in a strain of lively good humour, that to a little wine he never made any objection, though he was thankful to say his bodily infirmities were not such as to require a particular regimen. As to the quantity of wine, however, and the circumstances under which it should be taken, he doubted whether his friend's view would find a sanction in any of St. Paul's writings. In both these cases a snare was laid to entangle him in serious and fearful inconsistencies; but they were defeated by his watchful avoidance of the beginnings of sin.

Thus did L. answer fools according to their folly; but the path became more difficult when those who really wished him well spoke the convictions of their own minds respecting his supposed duty. To

them he had ever one argument to oppose: and that one was the union which bound him to Christ, as a member of his body, a partaker of his life. "I cannot," he said, "of my own will and choice, sit down among those who if I spoke to them of Jesus would receive the mention of that adorable name with scorn, dislike, or suspicion: who expect, as a matter of course, that I should lay aside what they are pleased to call the peculiarities of my religious opinions, and become as themselves, at least so long as they do not outrage the rules of decency and morality. They demand from me a tacit acknowledgment that the truths which I hold are unsuited for the ears of polite society; they require that I should hide God's righteousness within my heart, and forbear to tell them of the salvation which I have found, and to which they are yet strangers. Oh, how weak must be the constraining love of Christ within my soul, when I can so lightly put him aside, so wantonly trifle with the eternal welfare of my fellow-sinners!"

I have found it of great use, in many a perplexing juncture, to refer practically and experimentally to what we all in words confess—the abiding of the believer in Christ, and of Christ in the believer: and not one of my many many falls, and wicked inconsistencies, but I can trace at once to the neglect or forgetfulness of this privilege. I should not dare to be a partaker in other men's sins if I bore in mind that by so doing I allow the member to war against the head. I should not despise a weak brother, nor stumble at a strong one, if I considered the various offices of the hand, eye, foot, and that all are employed respectively for the advantage of the body. I should not flinch from a hard duty, if I remembered the sufficiency of Christ, enabling me to do all things by his strengthening power; nor shrink from a painful trial, if I could always realize the fact conveyed in that striking expostulation, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?" I may be called to many a hard and seemingly a doubtful contest; but Christ has already won the victory; and if I be in him, that victory, through his conquest, is mine. What would a poor Rose do, if it had only its own weak stalk to bear it up to its appointed height?

Grovelling in the dust, its petals would be trampled under every hoof, and its beauty become defilement. But, supported by the firmness, nourished by the life of the solid stem, it lifts its head aloft, rejoicing in the beam, quaffing the dew, and exhaling in fragrance the secret spirit derived from its all-sufficient stay.

The spot where the Rose-tree grows is almost a central point in Ireland: and it affords a pleasing type of the comparative unity subsisting among those who worship one God, through the one Mediator Christ Jesus, in sincerity and truth, though differing as to the most expedient mode of conducting that worship, or on the peculiar forms of church government. I do not say that there is not a great diversity! or even that they do not sometimes point against each other the thorns given for mutual defence; but compared with the spirit of dissension too often manifested on the other side of the water, there is much pleasing unanimity, and brotherly love. Assailed externally by a common foe, they can better appreciate the value of a bond which knits them together while uniting each to the great Head of the church; and how lovely it is to see brethren dwelling in peace together—how unnatural the appearance of division and strife! The aspect of a flower-garden is such, that even the heedless child is arrested to gaze on it, the most untutored clown acknowledges the charm of beauty and grace pervading it. Why is it so attractive? Because while every individual of its countless tribes retains a distinctive character of form, tint, and fabric, they all harmonize in peaceful association—all bear the evident impress of a divine hand; all reflect, in smiling gladness, the light of that day-beam which reveals them to us. I am not partial to the modern plan of planting in masses: it is one of man's supposed improvements on the design of God. The transition from a mass perhaps of cold, dark, purple flowers, to one of glaring scarlet, or unmixed pink or yellow, offends the eye. We do, indeed, discover many instances of such planting in natural scenery, but these are carried on upon a grand scale, not parcelled out in small knots, with the studied contrast that usually pervades the fashionable array of a modern garden. Nothing can be more beautiful

than the long line of white hawthorn flowers extending through a luxuriant hedge-row, or the deep rich purple of the heather drapery that decks some frowning rock, some lofty mountain, or wild track of uncultivated hills—the gay gold trappings of the abundant furze, the delicate blue of the flax, or showy blossom of the despised but beautiful potatoe plant. In all these instances, and many others, we have, I confess, a precedent for planting in masses; but then there is a breadth and a continuance in the picture, unlike the broken fragments of such a splendid whole, stuck in various quarters of a narrow parterre. Yet I do not advocate the system of budding, though in the present instance it afforded a type of what I dearly love to realize: and what ought to be much more frequently brought before the Christian's mind by those whose office it is to teach and to build up. Would that, like the flowers, we could agree to differ on minor points, and heartily rejoice together in the gifts so freely bestowed upon all!

I have made but slight mention of L., though the recollection of his calm consistency, and thankful appropriation of all that Christ offers to his believing servants, often refreshes my spirit, stimulating me to follow his course. He crossed my path like the evening star, first appearing in a full blaze of light, and almost immediately sinking beneath the horizon: but there are some characters that may be read as it were at a glance, and such was his. A single rose upon the tree, he was one of the brightest, yet lowly and simple as the primrose on the bank; ever delighted to discover in his fellow-Christians whatever might lead him to esteem them better than himself; faithful in necessary rebuke: rich in heavenly consolations to those under the chastening rod; but using in each and every occasion the strong plea of perfect union with Christ, as alike a motive of action and the principle of spiritual life. Who could ever explore the depths of that Scripture, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me?" There is something in this beyond the mere be-

longing to Christ: it shows an abiding in him of the same nature as that so clearly set forth in his own parable of the branch in the vine. It is such a partaking in his fulness as cannot be known but by being really grafted into him, and living by his life. We wrong ourselves, and frustrate the grace of God, if we stop short of this. Actually united to Christ, every real believer is as the members to the head, and the stalk to the stem: but to attain to an experimental knowledge and enjoyment of this union seems to be the aim only of a few among many. "Christ in you the hope of glory," is a mystery that some do not seem to realize. "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus," is a similar testimony, full of hope, joy, and peace in believing, if we will believe it. We take too low and dishonouring a view of our privileges; we stand afar off, in our own conceit, while acknowledged by him as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. We know not what it is to rejoice in the Lord alway; to glory in the Lord; to confess his strength in our weakness; to feel his power resting upon us, in the moment of depressing infirmity. When the rain beats hard on the poor frail flower, and the stormy wind has bent its head almost to the earth, what principle of elasticity enables it once more to rise, to shake off the dripping moisture, and smile anew in renovated vigor? Surely it is the nourishing power of the deep-rooted stem circulating through its slender frame that strengthens it to look up and meet the sunbeam from above, which but for that, would only hasten its decay. The very shining of God's countenance would destroy us, if Christ did not strengthen us to find refreshment in it.

I have met with not a few believers who are fearful of dwelling too much on this point, lest it may lead to presumption and indolence; but of this there is no danger while we follow out the lesson conveyed in God's word, and exemplified in his works. The branch, we are told, does not bear fruit of *itself*; yet we being addressed as branches, are exhorted to bring forth much fruit, that God may be glorified. If we can imagine the branch of a tree endued with sense and reason, we may easily conceive how, while putting forth its blossoms, and moulding its

fruit, it must depend on the continual supply derived from its stem: drawing freely from an inexhaustible source, in proportion to its present need. This is what the believer should feel; he has much work to do, but Christ supplies both means and skill to accomplish it: and if that supply should cease, he and his work must perish together. He has many trials to encounter: but whatever storm may assail him, Christ is the lifter up of his drooping head, imparting strength to resist, patience to endure, and in due time joy to revive his spirit. And this he is pledged to do: the act of ingrafting makes all the treasures of Christ the property of each poor believer,—in the emphatic words of inspiration, "All things are yours."

And oh, what a constraining power ought we not to find in this contemplation, urging, yea, compelling us to impart to others the rich gift so freely bestowed on ourselves! Can we revel in such abundance, and take no thought for the destitution of the perishing souls around us? Can we refuse to tell them what a Saviour we have found, nor invite them also to taste and see how gracious he is? "How dwelleth the love of Christ in them?" is a question closely applicable to such. As loyal subjects, we must desire the extension of our Master's kingdom; as rescued victims we must long to see others partaking in the same deliverance. Indifference to the spiritual welfare of others is an awful symptom of decay in godliness; and they who feel it have need to be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, lest their neglected privileges be withdrawn, and the compassion which they show not to their fellow-servants no longer be shown to them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DERRY.

It may appear strange that one whose delight is in the free fresh air of the garden, and among the living glories of its bright progeny, should have recourse to a *hortus siccus* for a subject, when all the

flowers of autumn, beautiful in their sobered tints, are proffering their gentle farewell. But so it is: I have looked upon them all, tracing many a similitude endeared by recollection, but again attracted to the object before me with a force of pathetic appeal which it is impossible to resist. My kind readers must bear with me, as they have often done; and now they must strive to accompany me, in thought and spirit, to the scene whither I am wandering: for it is one of deep and solemn interest to those who contemplate it aright.

But what bright importation from a distant land is this, to which all our world of native flowers is to give place? Indeed, it is no exotic, no stranger from a foreign shore; it is as simple a Buttercup as ever bent beneath your tread in a sunny meadow with its broad, downy leaf, and attended by one little half expanded blossom. It was the only flower I could find upon the spot, and I gathered it half reluctantly, for the place seemed almost too sacred to be robbed of the simple ornament. Man had raised no trophy there, no cenotaph, no tomb, no slab; but this flower, uncommonly rich in the depth of its golden tint, reposed upon the mount which had gradually swelled with the heaps of mortality deposited below, until it concealed in that particular place, six or eight feet of the wall beyond it: the memorable, the monumental wall of Derry Cathedral.

It had for a series of years been one of the dearest wishes of my very heart to visit this spot: but familiarized as I was with the tale of 1689, I had never looked upon Derry, nor approached within a hundred miles of its proud old wall. With what feelings, then, did I at last behold the beautiful Foyle, lying in rich repose beneath the bold magnificent chain of Ennishowen mountains, its full tide shining under a calm evening sky, with here and there a pleasure boat or fishing-smack spreading its sails to the light zephyr of July. Our approach was from the Coleraine road; and for a full hour I gazed upon Lough Foyle, and the swelling line of the graceful mountain tops beyond, ere, rising to the left, appeared the lofty and substantial spire of Derry; while, by slow degrees, the maiden city

herself became distinctly visible, seated as a queen upon her hilly throne, and forming altogether an object as beautiful to the eye as the associations connected with it were thrilling to the heart. At least to my heart, which throbbed even to aching with the excess of joyous emotion, as I passed—oh how warm a friend! under the gateway, where hosts of enemies thundered in vain for admittance during the dreadful siege of nearly eight months.

Many pleasant days I have spent at various places, the remembrance of which will be cherished while I live; but of the days that I passed in Derry no hour can be forgotten. Whatever gifts the Lord in his wisdom may have withheld from me, one, in rich mercy he certainly has bestowed: and that is a clear view of the privileges, an earnest desire to fulfil the duties, annexed to the sacred name of Protestant. I know what Popery is: I can discern the fearful names of blasphemy that cover it from the tips of its crowned horns to the cleft of its blood-stained hoofs, and the abject extremity of its scorpion tail. Within and without I behold the brand of antichrist; and equally in its lamb-like bleat and its dragon roar, I recognize the hateful strain, "dishonour to God in the highest; on earth desolation; perdition to men." And in my soul I believe, that to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem," can only be effectual, yea, can only be sincere, as it is indissolubly united to the firmest mental determination of holding "no peace with Rome."

And with these feelings I entered Derry, where I then thought, and am now most fully convinced, that an actual miracle had been wrought for the preservation of these realms from the hovering curse of Popery. I speak it deliberately, from a careful and leisurely survey of the ground occupied by the assailants, of the citadel defended by the assailed, and of the forces respectively employed. From the highest point of the steeple, which itself crowns the summit of the hill, and to which the spire has recently been superadded, I looked round, having in my hand a plan, drawn and attested by those engaged in the conflict, by means of which I could point out the precise station of every troop, every fort, every gun almost of the

army, which, with the exception of the open course of Lough Foyle towards the sea, completely surrounded the town, rendering the approach of succours from any landward quarter morally impossible; while across the channel, within a short distance, and distinctly visible to the naked eye, where the Foyle is narrowed for the space of a few yards by the approximation of two opposite points of land, was placed a boom of solid timber, the thickness of a horse's body, bound with iron chains, and made fast to either bank. It never entered into the calculation of friend or foe that any vessel would make head against this barrier; and General Kirke, on the mere report of it, relinquished all thought of attempting to relieve the garrison.

I dwelt long, and with intense emotion, upon the surrounding scenery: in point of mere natural loveliness, I should think it has no fellow; for that noble water, after flowing within its mountain bound to the foot almost of Ship-quay Gate, takes a graceful bend, roving round two-thirds more of the city, in the form of a very broad majestic river: while, beyond it, and on the western side, rise the most beautiful slopes, richly cultivated, adding as much to the picturesque grace of the peaceful landscape now, as they formerly did to the terrible advantages of the assailants, to whom they afforded such a commanding position, that the little city lay seemingly at their mercy, even as a weak lamb within a ring of butchers. But the Lord spread an invisible shield of miraculous protection over her, on which, while striking at the victim, they did but blunt their whetted knives. "Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness; and declare his wonderful doings to the children of men."

My first act had been to attend the morning week-day worship in the fine, but simple church. It is a cathedral: but the service performed there is that of a parish church. I am not ashamed to own that I took with me the remains of a cannon ball, broken in half by coming in contact with some more stubborn substance, in the bombardment of the devoted town; and laying it on the bench I acknowledged, with tears and thanksgivings, the great and marvellous work by which,

within those walls, God had preserved the gospel to these realms: for all must know, who do but glance at the map, that Derry once secured, such aid would have been thence poured into Scotland, already armed and disciplined in formidable insurrection, as must have terminated in the re-establishment of James on his abdicated throne. Surely, he in whose sight a thousand years are but as one day, beholds the hardness of their forgetful hearts, who come to worship in that temple, and praise him not for the deliverance.

But the flower:—I descended from the roof where the crimson flag had waved by day, and the signal fires had blazed by night, to move the heart of the pusillanimous Kirke in his distant anchorage, to attempt the succour; and where many a tearful look explored the bending line at Culmore, in longing expectation of approaching aid; while two cannons stood as sentinels over the sacred edifice, to cover the defenceless worshippers below. I went to the burying-ground that encircles the noble church, and there pondered over the results of eight months' mortality within the walls; the circuit of which is so incredibly narrow, that had I not paced them many times about, upon the broad and beautiful path that lies between the outer and the inner barrier—full sixteen feet in width,—I could not have believed the statement made by the historians of the siege. Within this space, measuring 1500 feet in the longest, and 900 in the broadest part of the town, no less than thirty-seven thousand human beings were enclosed, of whom seven thousand were military, and the rest inhabitants, and persecuted Protestants who had fled there for shelter. Of these a poor remnant alone was left, to welcome the long-deferred succour; and I pressed, not with a careless or unthinking tread, the graves of the many many thousands who had there found a resting-place for their weary bones, racked as they had been with pain, and laid bare by the extremity of famine.

There was no room for imagination to work: no thought could embellish the naked fact, for thought itself could scarcely grasp the awful reality. So thickly had the dead been crowded there, that the light covering of earth left to press them

down was frequently displaced by the enemy's shot, and the lifeless bodies themselves torn up by bursting bombs, presenting to their heart-sick survivors the horrible spectacle, and detaining them, as they left the house of prayer, to re-inter those ghastly mutilated fragments of what had been so dear to their bosoms. I could not but feel that this spot where I stood, when I had slowly mounted the hill of the slain, had a voice in every blade of grass that sprung from its surface, asking the careless Protestants of this generation as they pass by, "Have these suffered so many things in vain?" On one side an open iron railing alone separates the church-yard from the broad terrace of the rampart wall; and a fine old bastion lies beyond it, which covered Ferry-quay gate, the first that the intrepid apprentices closed in the enemy's face. Such a multitude of exciting recollections, mingled with sad forebodings of what is to come, crowded on my mind, that I cannot analyze or arrange my thoughts: I can but look on the little yellow Buttercup, carefully preserved, and summon to my view the scene where I gathered it; then glancing at a grape-shot and a small cannon-ball, which were dug from those graves at the interments of a later generation, beseech the Lord to awaken from their perilous lethargy the slumbering Protestants of this deluding day.

But is there no individual recollection combined with this little flower? There is one, strictly appertaining to the scene, which illustrates the indifference of modern Protestantism. I am no advocate for expending sums on the vain records of mortality; and a commemorative column or costly monument, is grievous rather than gratifying to me. Why should we give the dead a stone, while the living members of Christ want bread? Yet where gratitude has fixed a memorial of great national services, I am not one who, to save a few shillings, would let it moulder into oblivion.

There was, at the time of the siege of Derry, a gentleman whose family possessed, and do yet possess, local importance and political influence in the neighbourhood. His name was David Cairns: he rendered most invaluable services to the afflicted Protestants, was one of the

active defenders of their fortress, and by his judicious counsel contributed as much as any individual to the general cause. He was the first to encourage the Apprentice Boys, in resolutely prosecuting their plan of resistance; and after examining and assisting to strengthen their little fortress, he repaired on a hazardous journey to London, to represent the cause to William of Nassau; nor would he leave the court until he had obtained a letter of approval from the king, with the promise of speedy succor. The narrative of his services remains, cut in most distinct and legible characters upon a stone of very durable texture which marked his grave. I found that stone broken into three, of which the central part, containing much of the inscription, had been taken as a piece of waste masonry, to prop up the slab of some neighbouring tomb; another division lay, thrown by, in a stone-mason's yard: and the third was lodged, by the sexton's care, in some part of the church. I must confess, that when, after glancing towards the splendid column raised on the walls to the memory of George Walker, on which, indeed, is engraven also the name of Cairns, with those of others who distinguished themselves in the defence, I looked again upon the grave of that zealous Protestant, despoiled of its simple but honourable testimonial, of which a fragment lay before me, I felt that something was wanting of the grateful respect that ought to cherish such memorials; and I longed for a day's local authority in Derry, to accomplish what might be done with little labour and less cost, by riveting together the dis severed, but still perfect fragments, and building them into the church wall. Such a deed would better express the feeling that should be cherished than the gift of a new monument. It would commemorate alike the services of the individual, the honour put upon him by his grateful contemporaries, and the reviving spirit of Protestantism among their descendants.

But memorials will never be wanting on that spot where the rankly rich soil, in defiance of the frequent disturbance of its surface, rapidly spreads again a mantle of green, brightly embroidered with daisy pearl, laced with golden butter-cups, and pencilled in the soft blue of the pensive forget-me-not with inscriptions more touch-

ing than all the *hic jacets* that the sculptor's chisel can engrave. Like those who moulder beneath, they have now faded away: their little season is past, and the long grass waves there alone, until returning spring shall renew the fairy decoration. There is a touching coincidence between the ashes that from year to year mingle below in an undistinguishable mass of mortality, and the flowers that successively bloom on their frail stems above, and scattered their withered petals when the little day of their sojourn is over, an unmarked contribution to the swelling mound of what has been so fair, so fresh, and so precious. It is beautiful to see how, where the hand of man has placed no covering of stone, or when the perishable memento has crumbled away, the tender green blade and the sweet wild-flower volunteer, as it were, to stand sentinel over that which is but lent, not given, to the devouring grave, and clothe the naked soil in such a vesture as man with all his ingenuity could never weave. There is a sympathy neither imaginary, nor accidental, to be found in what is called nature, with the little joys and short-lived sorrows of man, that bespeaks the tender mindfulness of Him, who knowing that we are but dust, remembers our frame, and condescends to adapt his glorious works not only to our wants but to our feelings. It is not possible to linger long in a village church-yard without being compelled secretly to acknowledge this; for there the abundance of rural scenery renders that a very garden which would otherwise be but a charnel-house. Rarely, however, does a city afford such a contemplation: still less a sea-port town, and one like this, noted for centuries as a place of strength and commercial importance, where, within the space of half-a-year, we can number from ten to twenty thousand of victims committed to the narrow house of her dead.

It was in a pleasant meadow, gently slanting to a transparent rivulet, and lying outspread beneath the sunbeam, that first I crept upon the dry grass, filling my little lap with butter-cups and daisies, each budding thought as bright and simple as the treasures I had culled. It was under a cloudy sky, while every blade and leaf hung heavily down beneath the weight of recent rain-drops, emblematical of many

an intervening year of my life, that from the dwelling of the dead I bore away this solitary blossom, the thought that pressed upon me being as sombre as the scene. Yet a secret link unites the two epochs, as I look upon the dried but not faded flower; and I wished no sorrow untasted, no thorny path untrod, that combined to lead me under such impressions, to the precincts of Derry Cathedral. It is now no season for dallying with fanciful imaginations in the sunshiny parterre; we have darker scenes before us, and severer tasks to perform. Woe to us, if we trust in our own wisdom, power, or skill, and call not upon the Lord for help: woe to us, if, while calling upon him, we either deaden our hearts to the demand for personal effort, or withhold our hands from working toward the accomplishment of our professed desires, for the extension of the Lord's kingdom where Satan's seat now is!

CHAPTER XXVIII

PATRIOTISM.

THIS has been a brilliant season for flowers; alike in field and garden, hedge-row and conservatory, they have bloomed in an extraordinary profusion and peculiar richness of colouring. It would seem that the long nursing of their roots under the covering of winter had imparted additional vigour to the vegetable world. Levelled with the ground by severe frost, and speedily buried under some feet of drifted snow, all disappeared at the early period of October, last year: and so tardy were the little buds in peeping forth, that April transferred her leaflets to May, and May reserved her blossoms to swell the abundant store of June; allowing us nearly eight months to contemplate the spectacle of naked twigs, and to fancy how the scene would look when at last the flowers should show themselves. They came: and overpaid our long expectation. At least they richly overpaid mine: for, all things considered, I cannot say that so delightful a summer has ever before shone upon me. More joyous seasons indeed I

have known: but their joy was false and vain; the hand of God the Creator was perhaps traced and acknowledged in his works; but the love of Christ the Redeemer was unfelt—unknown. Such delight is perishable as the things that call it forth; unsatisfying as the ever-shifting scenery of floating clouds above us. Later summers have also brightened upon me, since the veil was removed, and the Saviour revealed, and every blossom that embroidered the pilgrim path was viewed as a pledge and earnest of the love that had no beginning and shall know no end. But there was sadness—oh, how deep and dark! upon my spirit: while the very value of the gift bestowed upon me, rendered the unfelt poverty of others, fondly beloved, more grievous, more intolerable to my soul. Like a heavy cloud, ever and anon obscuring the sunbeam, it chequered the prospect, and it chilled while it darkened me. There is no sorrow like that; no tears like those which stream over the heedless ones who will not be gathered under the same sheltering wing where we find blessing and repose. But this is past; those summers are ended, and those souls are in heaven.

The season, then, which has now closed, the reign of flowers through the last few months, has been one of greater enjoyment to me than any preceding it. I have greeted those loved and smiling companions through a long and varied track; the first that expanded before me was, as I well remember, within view of the majestic Thames, which rolled, studded with sails, to the eastern coast. Not many weeks had passed, before I was buried in a wilderness of the choicest sweets, that graced the borders of the noble Slaney: thence transferred to the banks of Anna Liffey, the hands of Christian love brought daily supplies of the beautiful but fading treasure. The next were gathered from a grave, or viewed through a mist of tears, as they gemmed the banks of a lake so fair and lovely that it was hard to trace in its gleaming waters the character of death; to identify with them the heaviest affliction of my life. But even there, and there in an especial manner, the little shining blossoms bore that impress, "God is love."

The next was a bouquet, gathered and

tastefully arranged, and gracefully presented—for is not true courtesy always graceful?—by the hands of a poor labourer, who saw me long engaged in contemplating the magnificent ruins of the ancient fortress of Trim; one of the finest feudal remains I ever beheld; worthy of a pilgrimage to view it. The incident of my stumbling on this splendid wreck, in a journey through cross roads, the delightful hour occupied in examining it, and the gift of those blooming flowers which grew in a garden at the foot of the eminence where it stands, left an impression on my mind, to be cherished while roses, pinks, and sweet peas survive to tell of their distant race under the crumbling walls of Trim. Next at the foot of Slieve Donard, I may truly say, I revelled in a paradise of flowers for many a sunshiny day; and my little English garden now nourishes some roots that grew on its lofty crest. Again, within the walls of another noble mansion, crowning with its battlements the high ground of Tandragee, a trophy was prepared to indulge the traveller's peculiar taste, in the form of the most beautiful garland I ever beheld: quite an architectural device, composed of glowing flowers. And this, too, was the work of humble hands; the offering of affectionate hearts, the fruits of that ingenuity which a desire to give pleasure to others never fails to inspire. I must not again speak of Derry; nor at present dwell upon the wild charms of Donegal, where masses of purple heather looked glorious in their simple beauty, as they studded and fringed the fantastic rocks, and crested the towering mountains of that unique region: while, spreading wide below, the delicate cup of the flax peeped forth in loveliest blue from amid its feathery supports. The last sweet relic of the flowers of Erin, was brought away from a bouquet that graced the cabin of the vessel which bore us homeward; and truly I may quote a couplet from a foolish song, as being literally fulfilled in this pleasant trip:

May the way they travel be strewed with flowers,
Till it bring them in safety home.

And here, in a little patch of ground, well crowded with all that can be made to grow in it, have I watched the fading of the various specimens that seem doubly endeared by the fact of their having

formed, as it were, the links of a pleasant chain, connecting me more closely than ever with the land I so dearly love.

But, for the present occasion I am not about to introduce a new subject; one frequently touched upon, but not recently, is so peculiarly fresh in my mind just now: and the type is no less fresh in my little garden. Years roll on: but I cannot feel what Kirke White expresses:

Thus doth the shade in memory fade,
When in forsaken tomb the form beloved is laid.

No: memory is a faithful chronicler, a mirror that retains the image once reflected in it as though it were still present; and my dumb Boy's aspect, his joyous smile, his thoughtful frown, his eloquent gestures, and earnest attempts to convey the meanings that ever filled his mind, are as visible to the mental perception now, as is the little green shamrock to the bodily eye. Patriotism such as Jack's I have rarely met with: and many a time have I pondered, during the last few months, on the nature and origin of that passion in his heart; for a passion it really was. His home was an obscure cabin, in the long, narrow street that formed one outlet from a considerable city. His steps rarely strayed beyond that dark and dreary street; he scarcely knew his way into the neighbouring fields: and of the peculiar features of Irish scenery he was perfectly ignorant. The habits of those around him excited only disgust in his naturally delicate mind: and he never ceased to remark on the superiority of English cottages and customs. Of the geographical situation of places he had no more idea than has the pen that I write with: nor had any sentiment, either in prose or verse, been conveyed to his mind, that could excite or cherish a particle of nationality. To say truth, I was somewhat dissatisfied at the unequivocal inclinations which he gave of greatly preferring my native land to his own: inasmuch that he used to say, in a laughing way, "Jack loves pretty England; doll mam loves bad Ireland." The term doll he used to signify, in a civil way, that the person to whom he applied the epithet had a wooden head. But, ever as the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ spread and brightened upon his soul, a feeling grew and deepened with it, to which I can hardly

apply a name. The idea of returning to his own country was to him insupportable; indeed, if a fit of rebellion to which, like all the rest of us, he was subject, withstood all other means, the remark that he must be sent back to his home never failed to subdue him. Neither was this from a dread of enduring privation, for he often observed to me, that he could earn a good deal by working and drawing; but a half-tearful appeal, whether I would send Jack to worship wooden gods, and kneel to the "bad bread," always showed his real feeling; generally followed by an energetic assurance that he would be "dead Jack" rather than do any such thing:—that they might kill, but should not corrupt him. Added to this was a most ardent desire to bring his parents and family to England; it was his dream by night his theme by day, the subject of many a prayer, and the stimulus to many an hour's hard work with the pencil, by means of which he hoped in time to accomplish this darling object. Whence, then, the feeling so fervently Irish, that displayed itself continually, gathering strength daily, during more than six years' absence from his native land, and shining out in the very last glimmer of consciousness, when the hand of death was cold and heavy upon him! Some of it he might and did catch from me; but nothing that had not its root in his own spirit could have become such a master-passion. He could not speak long upon that subject without tears: and the ardour of his kindness towards any poor countryman whom we might meet on the road, or who came to our cottage door to crave alms, was most affecting to witness. When, as was very often the case, we prevailed with some weary traveller from the coast, where he had recently landed and was walking up to London, to listen to God's word, while taking a little rest and refreshment, no description, no painting, could have done justice to the boy's appearance. His usual position, on such occasions, was to stand behind a chair, so as to get a side view of the stranger without being observed; and with a fixed, deep colour in his cheeks, he would remain, like a piece of statuary, bending under his drooping eyelids such a gaze of intent observation upon the object of his solicitude as nothing could divert. He,

of course, knew not a word that passed; but the purport he well knew: and often have I thought, as I looked upon him, of the beautiful words of St. Paul, as expressing his tender yearnings over his countrymen, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you!"

When the door closed finally over such a guest, he would, if the case appeared a promising one, give a loose to great joy; often expressing it in the most extraordinary descriptions of what he supposed to be the feelings of Satan on the occasion. He would make strange grimaces of discontent, grief, and rage, saying, "Devil very dumpy; devil cry; devil mad." Then he would express what must be the consequences to the Romish priesthood if the people were converted; and no one could behold this part of the representation without laughing. He would personate a priest, show him extorting his dues and gifts from the poor people; then describe the latter as refusing them, and, instead of money, pulling out a bible from their pockets. Then, on the priest's part, all the gradations from violent rage to smiling persuasion, and at last to a most humble entreaty for a little cash. It was amazing how he, who never in his life witnessed a theatrical exhibition of any kind, would perform a complete pantomime; and that so well that any explanation or elucidation, except as regarded the ways of the priests at home, was quite needless. When his delight had thus vented itself, he would gradually become serious; and with subdued looks, but still in a glow of the brightest animation, would sketch the gladness of the angels at beholding a soul rescued from Satan, and the sublime vision that ever occupied his mind—the Saviour's bleeding hand drawn over the record of a returning sinner's misdeeds.

Jack was never careless about souls; no individual lacked a share in his busy thoughts on the great subject of the eternal doom: but there was no mistaking for a moment as to the fact if the person happened to be Irish. Then it became indeed a personal concern with him: all the scenes that had distressed his eyes in childhood, and the recollection of which grieved his heart would rise to view. He spoke of the drunkenness, the dishonesty, the dreadful

quarrels and fights, for which his birth-place was disgracefully famous; and above all, he dwelt with shuddering horror on the executions that he had witnessed at the gaol near his abode; where the priests went on to the last, lulling the wretched victims in a false peace, till their struggling forms were cast upon the wind. I never could bear his description of this; but as his mind would have brooded over it unless allowed to throw off the burden by such communication, I let him proceed, contriving not to see what he was about. He would then follow the guilty soul into another state of existence; and nothing could equal the fearful force of his conceptions of eternal despair, but the enchanting grandeur of those which he had formed of heavenly happiness. With the latter he invariably closed his subject. I have of late been reminded of this almost hourly; for few hours have passed during many months, without the pages of old John Foxe spread before me; and verily I have seen more of the dear dumb boy in the characters, the sentiments, the very language of our blessed martyrs, than I expected ever to trace in any human beings. I had contrived to give him a tolerable idea of queen Mary's doings, and the hold that it took on him was evinced in rather a strange manner. He never once alluded to the place of torment without telling me that Judas and queen Mary were chained together there. I could not enter into the thing as he did. I could not accord to that wretched woman the fearful pre-eminence that he assigned to her: but a closer acquaintance with the sufferings of our English confessors has brought it involuntarily to my thoughts, with something like an acquiescent shudder.

But this patriotism:—it was a perfect thing in its way; he loved a pebble, or a blade of grass from Ireland; and he guarded like a surly watch-dog my little pot of shamrocks, if any irreverent finger threatened to approach it; and all these things were inseparably linked, in his very soul, with the spiritual concerns of his people. Even when he wept over the stubborn soil in a droughty season, because potatoes would not grow in Ireland for want of rain, the reason he gave for his tears was that the poor Irish would

die before they heard of Jesus Christ's red hand; and his rapturous thanksgivings for a timely fall of rain were intermingled with earnest injunctions to me to send "much bibles" over. I believe I have mentioned before, that his worldly all of two shillings sterling was the very first contribution ever given to the British Reformation Society: and I never trace the successful progress of that noble institution without beholding an answer to the simple fervent prayers that accompanied the gift. I sought and found the shamrock in every part of Ireland, during my late tour: and I could not but hail it as a type of the extensive power of that prayer, so passionately reiterated during the last moment of the boy's life. His hands, literally bathed in the streaming chills of death, rapidly moved to form with the fore fingers little crosses, and then violently to break them, in signification of destroying the idol crucifixes; then the right hand swiftly passed up and down the palm of the left, to represent the spreading of mortar, and both joined together gradually raised as high as he could reach, to imitate the building of a spire, which was his usual sign for a Protestant church—then again lowered to spell the words; "quick, quick; Jack's poor Ireland!" implying that it was the only way to save his country, and must not be delayed. All this is as present to me as it was at the time, in February, 1831. Oh, there was a holy hatred of the destroyer of his people, and a solemn triumph in the near view of God's righteous judgments, that ranked him with the martyrs, the confessors of the early days, when Christians knew no fellowship with Antichrist; when the unclean thing was an abomination to them; and when they dared not to throw a friendly veil, and spread a sheltering hand, over that which the Lord has solemnly declared he will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming.

I often feel alone in these matters now; few will give themselves so to search the scriptures, so to read the history of Protestantism, and so to mark the workings of popery, as to kindle over the contemplation, and long to rush to the help of the Lord against the mighty. But though alone, I am not disheartened: when the

little shamrock shall again hide its soft green leaves under the rivers of Protestant blood that have more than once drenched its native soil, then England will be roused. God grant it be not too late ! It is for Him to determine whether he will accept such tardy service at our hands ; but this I will say, that those who are now lending their silver and gold, their time, their talents, their influence, and *their prayers*, to Jack's poor Ireland, in the spirit and with the view that belonged to him, will learn the blessedness of such a work when they meet the Dumb Boy in the kingdom of glory.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE BISHOP.

THERE was once a feeling in the Church of England that seems to have faded into a remembrance of the past, rather than to be a thing of present existence. I allude to the veneration in which the chief pastors of the flock were held, when, casting off the iniquitous mystery of darkness that had shrouded them in the imaginary sanctity, and armed them with the real terrors of a perverted and polluted pre-eminence, the bishops of the Reformation stood forth, arrayed in the garments of holiness, and walking in the light of an unveiled gospel. The brightest burst of sudden spring over a naked and storm-wrecked landscape scarcely typifies that revival. The wildernesses and solitary places of our land were made glad because of them : the blighted desert of Antichrist rejoiced and blossomed as the rose. The soft notes of the dove were heard, breathing peace and tenderness, where the coiled serpent alone had hissed and the ravening lion had roared after his prey. Then it was that an offering was made to the Lord, even the offering of the heart willingly yielded to Him, and a pure incense of "praises with understanding" supplanted the impure smoke of a debased carnal service. Then it was that the good bishops threw open the doors of their habitations, not to close

them again on the secret conclave of priestly underplotters, assembled to devise plans for riveing ancient fetters, and forging new ones for the flock, but to invite their brethren to mutual encouragement in their work of faith and labour of love—to strengthen the weak, comfort the persecuted, exhort the unruly, and confirm the wavering. Not to dazzle the laity with a display of pomp and pride abhorrent to the spirit of the gospel, but to nourish the bodies of the poor with the meat that perisheth, and to supply their souls with that which nourisheth unto everlasting life. Then the bishop, robed in his gown with the flat-crowned doctor's cap on his head and the long beard imparting additional dignity to his aspect moved in meekness and gravity along the lofty hall, seeing that his humble guests were properly cared for, and waiting to bestow the ghostly counsel that severally or together, they desired to receive at his hands.

Such was the spectacle displayed when a Ridley, a Hooper, a Latimer or a Cranmer presided. Their light shone before men with a pure and mellow lustre, illuminating and warming wheresoever it fell ; until, blending with the short-lived blaze of martyrdom, it was swallowed up in the glory that endureth everlastingly. Then he that desired the office of a bishop, desired really a good work ; and little indeed could the dross of filthy lucre, or the glitter of external pomp, or the grasp of ecclesiastical power, weigh with men who saw beyond that vista, the dungeon and the stake.

These times of fiery trial are past ; the manners of that age have given place to others as dissimilar from them as are the present abodes and employments of our prelates from those of their early predecessors : but blessed be God ! the same spirit remains, and he sometimes bestows the heart of our primitive bishops on those who occupy their high places in the church. Often, in very early years, have I wandered among the relics of former days, in an episcopal residence where one of the fiercest and most savage persecutors of Mary's reign rioted in the blood of the Lord's innocent sheep ; and as I marked the rich foliage, the thousand brilliant flowers that flung their graceful veil over broken ruins, rendering that most lovely which was formerly most sternly

obdurate and harsh, I traced the more glorious transformation of the episcopal office—or rather its restoration to that which God designed it to be.

There was a ruined porch in that garden which seemed to have belonged to a tower of great strength. Iron gates had enclosed it; massive bars had crossed and recrossed the narrow, pointed windows, and from its detached position, within the impregnable enclosure of a double wall, flanked by defensive towers, I never doubted its character of a prison. All, however, was then so changed as to render it a beautiful ornament to the grounds. No bolt remained: the old grey-stone that had bidden defiance to time, looked forth between the clusters of ivy and woodbine, and other climbing plants, while the gayest profusion of yellow wall-flower, variegated lichens, and long tufts of that most graceful and touching emblem of mortality, "the flower of grass," waved lightly on its broken summit. Roses and jonquils concealed its base; the interior was gravelled; rustic seats were placed around; and the dark prison-house of merciless Rome had become a beauteous summer-bower under the mild hand of Christian culture.

And from among that cluster of flowers, I select the China-rose, the most simple, unostentatious, and enduring of its numerous family: the first, in spring, to open its pale, elegant petals to the early sunbeam—the last to quail beneath the winter's blast. I select it not in connection with the antique ruin that my childhood loved, but with one whose task it was to preside, first in the spot consecrated by the pastoral charge of the blessed Hooper, and brightened by the fires of his martyrdom; and subsequently where God was glorified in the death of several martyrs, Robert Glover, Joyce Lewes, and others whose name are in the book of life. Yes, it was upon a half-opened China-rose that my tears first fell, when, on the second of April, 1836, I first learned the removal to his Master's mansion of that dear servant of Christ, Henry Ryder, Bishop of Gloucester first, afterwards of Lichfield and Coventry.

Few, very few, indeed, if there be even one, among those who read these pages, will fail to recognize a name dear to their

hearts in that which I have mentioned. Bishop Ryder possessed, beyond most men, the love and veneration of God's people. There was that in his character, in his manners, in his very aspect, that laid hold on the best affections of our nature, and would not let them go. I never saw a man who brought so strongly to mind the picture my fancy loved to draw of a bishop, in the bright, sad days of our martyrs. There was a childlike humility, a simplicity that nothing could tarnish, a meekness that served to render more impressive the animated energy called forth on occasions when this beloved pastor had to plead the cause he so deeply cherished. It is well known that he underwent a protracted martyrdom of feeling—and he was keenly sensitive—when, with the voice of authority, and the louder language of example, he first strove to awaken the slumbering watchmen, and to call in the roving, unfaithful shepherds under his charge. Evangelical truth, though familiar to their lips in the stated services of our church, was a new and a strange and a hateful thing to the apprehension of the great bulk of the clergy, at the time when Dr. Ryder was raised up to enforce it. Known to the Lord are all the conflicts endured by that tender but constant spirit, when, fixed like the China-rose to its supporting wall he offered himself to the most savage blasts of the first break of winter, resolved to shine before men, and to breathe incense to his God, whosoever shrank back—determined, in His strength, to stand, whosoever might fall or flee. Long it was ere the storm of persecution abated; longer ere the gentle hand of spring awoke a few companions to countenance him in the singularity of his holiness. But the season advanced, and brightened, and gladdened him with a vast number of associates, each in his own form, and his own place, rejoicing to do the will of his Master.

Many of my readers, who perhaps knew not the severity of Doctor Ryder's early trials in the character of a Christian Bishop, must have been struck by the expression of heavenly gladness—so calm, yet so earnest—that marked his countenance, when, presiding over a public meeting, he cast his eye upon the animated crowd of listeners, while his ear drank in

the pleadings of some zealous brother on behalf of those who were perishing for lack of knowledge; or the enumeration of successes already gained in the glorious cause. There was a time when he, like Elijah, had seemed alone in the midst of an unfaithful church: and his joy was as that of Elijah, when the convinced and prostrate multitude sent forth that shout, "The Lord, he is the God!" Full of love to the Saviour, and love to his fellow-men, that dear servant of Christ longed to gather into the fold every wanderer on the face of the whole earth; and there was not an effort made, from pole to pole, in which his heart took not an interest most deep, while his spirit went forth to every land, with those who proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation, and published peace.

But there was one portion of a neglected vineyard, which it was the dearest privilege and delight of this blessed man to bind up, and to prop, and to nourish. Poor Ireland's ancient, rich, and beautiful vine, so long rent down, trampled under foot, defiled, and preyed-on by the wild beasts that ravage the land, excited his tenderest sympathies. It was in the prosecution of this work that one whom I had long revered at a distance became the object of nearer and more devoted regard; and few among many privileges were more prized than that of being saluted as friend by the good bishop—the unwearied promoter of the cause. Like the China-rose at my cottage door, he thus came under my frequent, habitual observation, and I could trace the resemblance that so beautifully connects him with the flower. At once so gentle, so unobtrusive, so graceful, and so sweet, each knew to endure hardness as a good soldier, uninfluenced by outer circumstances. Each was foremost to take the field, each the most persevering to retain it. Both looked so delicate that it might have seemed easy to overpower them by a show of opposition: both, leaning on a powerful support, bade calm defiance to the assault. Sometimes my rose-bush has caught me in passing, and when thus arrested I have stood to admire the rich gifts of God in the beauty and fragrance of the tree: even so, by his fervently affectionate appeals, have I seen the good bishop arrest the giddy hearer, and fix him in serious contemplation of

those divine graces which he showed forth while magnifying them as the gift of the Lord.

But man, in his best estate, is frail; and in his most mature decisions fallible. Bishop Ryder was carried away by the universality of his loving spirit, operated upon by the specious pleadings of the enemy who can transform himself into an angel of light. He yielded his assent to the measure that deprived England of her bright crown—he surrendered the strong hold of his country, in a blind reliance on the pledges of that church whose notorious principle it is to keep no faith with those whom she insolently calls heretics. That his having been so deluded was, to the good bishop, a source of deep and abiding regret, I can confidently say: that he looked with abhorrence on the rising rampancy of the Romish church, I know; and that he redoubled his efforts to uproot the abominations to the encouragement of which he had unwittingly or rather unwatchfully contributed, is witnessed by hundreds and thousands, who marked the increase of his zeal in that particular cause. I would not draw a veil over this error in judgment: I would not palliate it. The inspired record affords no example for so doing: and be they still in the flesh, or removed into the presence of the Lord, I say of all who connived at that national transgression, that it was a sin only to be blotted out by the blood of the Lamb. Often, when I have looked on the meek but animated countenance of that apostolic prelate, has my heart wrestled in prayer for him, that God would grant repentance and remission of the sin. I have thought of Peter, when, gifted as he was with so many and bright endowments from above, and honoured beyond others in the great multitude to whose conversion he was instrumental, a brother apostle saw cause to withstand him to the face, because he was to be blamed. God forbid that I should glory in the grace bestowed on a Ryder or a Wilberforce, without a feeling of deep abasement that in this matter they grievously erred.

My china-rose tree is not free from blemish. Where on this sin-soiled earth shall we find an object wholly untainted as when the Lord first looked upon his finished work and pronounced it very

good? Yet among the loveliest of inanimate creatures, that rose is singularly beautiful, abundant and abiding. It throws an embroidered mantle, wonderfully wrought to the glory of divine workmanship, over the unsightly nakedness of man's poor contrivances; and brightens what would otherwise be a scene of unrelieved desolation. Its very weakness is a call for our tender sympathy; for such are we all in frailty—but how few of us are such in the adornments which God has provided, and commands us to put on!

The praise of the good bishop Ryder is in all the churches: there is no quarter of the globe where his efforts have not reached for the furtherance of the gospel: but chiefly on the spiritual wilderness of poor Ireland, and over the wretched abodes of her outcast children in this country, was their influence felt: and surely incense more acceptable arose not to the

Lord from the dwellings of man, than the pleadings and prayers that had for their object the diffusion of light and peace, where all was strife and darkness. The memory of that man is doubly blessed, who, while caring for every sheep of his own apportioned fold, stretched forth the arms of love to gather also the poor wanderers whom few recognized as claimants even on their thought, much less upon their mental energies, and worldly means, to an extent almost unlimited. Scenes more recent, names more immediately before the public, may throw into comparative shade those that have passed away: but I am not so weaned from what I have loved and venerated:—I delight to pause in my walk, to number the unfolding blossoms of the China-rose, and with a swelling heart to ponder on the memory of one who is transplanted to a fairer garden—the good bishop Ryder.

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P O E M S

FOUNDED ON THE

EVENTS OF THE WAR

IN THE

PENINSULA.

TO FIELD MARSHAL
THE MOST NOBLE
ARTHUR,
DUKE OF WELLINGTON,
OF CUIDAD RODRIGO, AND OF VICTORIA,
PRINCE OF WATERLOO

K. G. G. C. B. K. G. F. G. C. T. S. G. C. M. T.

&c. &c. &c.

THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY HIS GRACE'S
VERY GRATEFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

POEMS.

TO FIELD MARSHAL HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

HUSHED is the lofty note thy trumpet
poured ;—
The laurel garland and the olive bough
Hide in luxuriant shade thy warlike sword,
Wave o'er thy head, and twine around
thy brow :
On rising billows thy triumphant prow
Hath rode exulting, and defied the storm ;
While like the dark and troubled wave below,
Dimly my feeble lay reflects the form
Of that majestic Bark, with life and glory
warm.

Yet scorn it not, unworthy though it be,
For in the trembling hour of doubt and
fear,
This heart its dearest treasures gave to thee,*
To tread attendant on thy bright career ;
To poise at thy behest the glittering spear
That bore the tyrant headlong from his
throne ;
Thy deathless trophy of renown to rear,
And press where'er thy meteor standard
shone,
From Tejo's royal tide, to Gallia's proud Ga-
ronne.

The mellowing hand of Time may soften
down
The vivid tints that on the canvas glare ;
But his mild touch with richer grace shall
crown
The master strokes that shine immortal
there.

* The husband and the brother of the Author served in the Army under the command of His Grace during the War in the Peninsula.

Nor blooms thy Lusian wreath less brightly
fair,
Though clustering garlands emulate its
hue ;
Or single or combined, they still declare
That hand the vengeful bolt unerring
threw,
From Assaye's burning plain, to awful Waterloo.

Joy to the living Brave ! and peace to those
Who sealed their triumphs with the free-
born tide !
Whether their last exulting breath arose
Where Gaul's fierce eagles stooped their
towering pride ;
Or saw they the Atlantic wave divide
Their country from her sons with mighty
roll,—
And fell by thy lamented Pakenham's side,
When he to Heaven resigned his gallant
soul,
In climes whence Wolfe had sprung to that
celestial goal.

Warrior ! with matchless might thine arm
hath braved
The sternest onset of thy Country's foe ;
With equal grace thy soothing hand hath
waved
The branch that bade war's torrent cease
to flow.—
Poor were the gifts that grateful Kings be-
sow,
But thou canst gild them with thine own
bright blaze ;
And long, Oh long may that rich lustre
glow,
To cheer our peaceful councils with the
rays
That flashed in blasting power on the Usurper's
gaze !—

A SKETCH,

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR MDCCCIV.

THE sullen echo of the cannon's roar
Had died in silence on Corunna's shore ;
The lessening fleet had mingled with the sky,
That bore the freight of grief-clad victory.
A generous foe had raised the hero's tomb,
Admired his prowess, and deplored his doom :
Heaven's gentle dews dispersed the sanguine
stain,

Spring cast her verdant mantle o'er the slain :
They rested in their glory ;—and the scene
Was still and calm as war had never been ;
Deserted all the long contested shore,
And silence dwelt around the tomb of Moore,
Spread o'er the subjugated hills of Spain,
And reigned o'er hapless Lusitania's lost domain ;
The gloomy silence of the dead was there,—
The deep and awful stillness of despair :
England had fought in vain, and left the land
Which bowed to usurpation's lawless hand.
Where was the hope that could their fears be-
guile ?

The waves had borne it back to Britain's Isle.
While conscience told of envy and mistrust,—
Spain was ungrateful, and Britannia just.
Affrighted Lisbon dreads another flood,
A second deluge of her native blood.

What guardian angel hovers o'er the coast ?
Vimeiro's hero leads a British host !
O is it he, the victor chief sublime,
The conquering warrior from Hindostan's clime ?
Behold the martial air, the lofty crest,
The piercing eye, 'tis Wellesley stands con-
fess'd.

Eager they press the welcome band to view,
And scarcely deem the glorious vision true,
Impatient to believe, yet fearful doubt
Dimmed the glad eye, and check'd the joyful
shout ;
On trembling lips the half-breathed "Viva"
hang,
Throbb'd in the heart, but faltered o'er the
tongue,

Till victory on each beaming helm appears,
To soothe their minds, and dissipate their fears.
O then how loud was raised th' exulting cry ;
What oft redoubled "Vivas" rent the sky !

'Tis not for my weak pencil to portray
The Chief who led Britannia's proud array ;
'Tis not for me to paint that wondrous mind,
Which holds each lofty attribute combined,
Which claims alike the laurel and the palm,
Heroic valour poised by judgment calm.

Let prudence speak, or enterprise inspire,
This prompt the fight or that the cool retire,
The Leader hears, views, ponders and combines,
Then moves with silent speed his ready lines ;
If retrograde, where breathes the hardy wight,
Who dares to call that calm retreat a flight ?
If to advance, more bold were he to stay,
And brave the issue of so dire a fray ;
Witness France, India, Portugal and Spain,
Our Wellesley never drew the sword in vain ;
Alike unknown to him to fly or yield,
Victor he stood on ev'ry battle field.
Nor end his labours with the conflict done,
Still vigilance and Wellington are one ;
When sleep and silence reign throughout the
camp,

The wakeful Chieftain trims his midnight lamp ;
While Heaven applauding gives its aid divine,
He plans with matchless skill the high design ;
To rescue nations, bid oppression cease,
And bless the world with Liberty and peace

See Murray,* the Ulysses of the war,
The mighty engine at his word prepare ;—
As the calm helmsman at the rudder placed,
Guides the rich freight along the watery waste ;
The wise Commander bids the chart unroll,
That points th' obtrusive rock and treacherous
shoal ;

Silent he watches with experienced eye,
The breakers rise, the hostile rock is nigh,—
He gives th' expected sign, with sudden tack,
The well-trimmed vessel finds her destined
track ;

Again the Chief commands—the ropes they
strain,
She floats triumphant o'er the subject main.
So plans great Wellesley's mind, acute and
clear,

The future progress of his high career ;
So Murray stands with cool observant skill,
And moves the vast machine obedient to his will.
Of judgment clear and comprehensive mind,
Stewart† fulfils the task his Chief designed,
To hear, arrange, embody and enroll
The wide minutiae of the mighty whole.
Well might'st thou deem that soul of serious
bent

Were meet for the cabinet than tent ;
But mark him when the battle shouts arise ;
How keen the ray that flashes from his eyes !
He checks his charger with a master hand,
And bends attentive for the wished command ;
Then shakes his lofty plume, and gives the rein,
And like a whirlwind scours the distant plain :

* Sir George Murray, Quarter Master General of the Army.

† Lord Stewart, Adjutant General of the Army during the Campaigns of the years 1808, 10, 11, and 12

Bold Erin's fire o'er every feature beams,
And on his dazzling blade the foeman's death-
light gleams.

Once more the red-cross banner streams on
high,
"England for Lusie" once again the cry;
The sword is drawn, the scabbard cast away,
And files on files their glittering front display;
Pour their bold numbers with resistless force,
And hold unchecked a long victorious course;
In vain the foe, on Douro's farthest strand,
Sought a last refuge for his flying band;
The stream is crossed,—and welcome came the
night,
With friendly veil to shroud their panting flight,
And stay the fury of that dreadful spear,
That pressed impetuous on their shrinking rear.

Mindful of Lisbon's unprotected towers,
The Chief returns with his triumphant powers;
Short space they pause, then flushed with con-
quest wheel

Their sounding march, to succour high Castile.
Now Talavera viewed the awful sight,
Two mighty bands preparing for the fight:
The battle raged beneath the noontide ray,
It raged unsated at the close of day:
Another rises,—do they still remain?
Renew the conflict!—England fights for
Spain!

On, gallant Hill!* confirm thy brilliant fame,
And charge them boldly in thy Country's name!
'Tis done—and victory wavers now no more,
The last fierce struggle of despair is o'er;
Old England's well-known shout ascends on
high,
And her victorious flag floats to the evening
sky.—

Oh, for one gleam of the bright ray that shone
O'er the unconquered plains of Arragon!
Could not the sound of Saragossa's name
Tinge yon pale Spaniards with the hue of
shame?

Still shall the scowl of the malignant eye
Lour on the dawn of Hope and Liberty!
Shall Envy's hissing snake, and Discord's brand,
Still render vain the might of Wellesley's hand?
Ingrates, farewell! full many a sanguine stain
Shall dew the bosom of unworthy Spain,
Ere those indignant bands seek her dark hills
again.

Lusia, the patient and the brave, extends
Her faithful arms, in welcome to her friends:—

* Lord Hill; who commanded the second Division of
Infantry at the Battle of Talavera, and the Right Corps
of the Army in the subsequent Campaigns.

Rash foeman pause, and deem it not a flight;
The sword is flaming on Busaco's height:
Presumptuous! thou would'st check the lion's
way,
And he has turned, and holds thee at a bay;—
Back! and retrace thy mountain path again,
He scorns thy force,—the bold attempt is vain.

—"Where is the mighty hero, where his pride?"
In weak derision soon the Frenchman cried,
"Flames he beyond the lines of Portugal,
"Or does he couch beneath frail Lisbon's
wall?
"Where can this champion of Iberia flee,
"Our ranks before him, and behind the sea?
"Can one small tract of barren land sustain
"These British heroes, and these hopes of
Spain?"

—And was it so? Alas! on ev'ry side
The reign of terror now had spread so wide,
That nations paralysed had dropped the sword,
And owned in silent awe one despot lord.
The Russian eagle cowered his sable head,
And closed his drooping wing in angry dread;
While Austria, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden
joined,

In one disgraceful sullen league combined.
Then Liberty through Europe's ample bound,
But three small consecrated spots had found;
Her temple built on Albion's mighty rock,
Unshaken stood, and still defied the shock:
At Cadiz yet she found undaunted Græme
Preserved an altar sacred to her name;
Through Lisbon's crowded streets her step
might stray,
For Wellington had barred th' invader's way;
His fiery sword was drawn, though still his
hand,
And stillness reigned throughout each hostile
band.

Momentous pause! ev'n England shuddered
then,
And rapt attention filled the minds of men:
Not half so dread that cloud's impending form,
That silent tells the fast approaching storm;
The scale is poised aloft; and all discern
The fate of Europe hangs upon the turn.

A sudden fear the vaunting foe o'ertakes:—
They move—'tis done! the gathered tempest
breaks;
And Wellington at that blest signal starts,
Swift as from Heaven's wide arch the lightning
parts;
Grand as its bursting blaze of living light,
Is that which marks his path in streaming
glory bright.

What muse of fire shall dare that path to trace,
 And sing the splendours of the victor's race?
 How each presumptuous obstacle he spurned,
 And high Rodrigo's ducal honours earned?
 How Badajoz in vain his arms withstood,
 And bloodily defended, fell in blood;
 What wreaths on Salamanca's plain he won,
 From daring France and her determined Son?
 Her columns moved magnificently bright,
 Firm and compacted as the rocky height:—
 Now crushed, dispersed, afar the wrecks are
 borne,
 Like those majestic rocks by sudden earth-
 quakes torn.

What joyful crowds upon the hero wait,
 When glad Madrid had oped her royal gate,
 And the vain shadow of a King was flown
 Far from her blood-stained and degraded throne.

Our Wellesley's matchless triumphs have sub-
 dued

Envy, Mistrust, and base Ingratitude:—
 Iberia proffers to his saving hand
 Her power unfettered, and supreme command.
 The clouds of dark Suspicion roll away,
 And Freedom cheers her with its dawning ray.
 The Chieftain springs his flaming sword to
 wield

In dreadful vengeance on Vitoria's field;
 That fiery combat and exulting chace,
 That sealed the weak Usurper's last disgrace.

Now cease, ye warriors, view your perils past,
 The glorious consummation hail at last:
 'Tejo had swelled th' avenger's step to greet,
 And bade his billows gambol at your feet;
 Douro had heaved his rushing tide in vain
 To clear his groaning borders of the slain,
 When first upon his wave your banners rose,
 And shone above your hecatombs of foes;—
 Once more his stream was destined to convey
 The venturous bands that smoothed the rugged
 way.

Ebro had mourned by Saragossa's wall,
 Awful in triumph, glorious in her fall!
 Deep in the caverns of his cozy bed,
 Oblivion's mantle wrapped the mingled dead;
 The hostile step profaned his flowery shore,
 Bathed with unsparing tides of patriot gore,
 Till his glad stream beheld your conquering
 course,

And murmured sounds of triumphs from its
 source.

Yes, all are passed:—broke is the Despot's
 chain;
 And Portugal is free—enfranchised Spain!

Why pause ye not? why turn your eager eyes
 Where yonder Pyrenean heights arise?

There rests each panting foe upon his lance,
 Beyond is spread the sacred soil of France;—
 —“On, Soldiers, on! the Gallic land's in view;
 The glorious deeds of other days renew;
 Bid Agincourt and Cressy live again,
 Revenge for England, Portugal and Spain!”—
 Light as the sportive kids that spring to crop
 The tempting verdure of the mountain's top,
 Our warriors scale each height, secure each
 pass,

And brave the terrors of each frowning mass.
 Chased to their native holds the robbers turn,
 With desperation's fire their bosoms burn—
 Fiercely they rush on their undaunted foe,
 Who holds his progress steadily and slow.
 Down many a lofty mountain's verdant side
 Streams with unsparing gush the life-warm
 tide;

The rocks reverberate in sullen tone,
 The roar of cannon, and the dying groan,
 While hand to hand their rage-strung nerves
 they strain
 To check the advancing force—but strive in
 vain.

Shades of the valiant dead, arise! advance!
 Once more the red cross flag waves o'er the
 fields of France!

And chiefly thou from yonder sea-beat shore,
 Heroic martyr, loved lamented Moore?
 Come and rejoice in thine and Scotia's fame.
 Behold her Stewart,† Ramsay,‡ Hope,§ and
 Græme.||

Stewart, the high-souled son of chivalry,
 With heart of fire, and valour-beaming eye;
 Gentle in peace, as terrible in war,
 And decked with many a deep and glorious scar.
 Ramsay whose veins boast that unswollen tide,
 That gushed with patriot zeal by Wallace' side;
 In whose unshrinking soul, and tranquil mind,
 The eagle and the dove are gracefully com-
 bined.

* “Sacred soil of France!”—It was the custom of the French to call it so, in their days of conquest and unbounded arrogance; they vaunted their country secure from the possibility of invasion. And the soldiers of the Allied Army, as in their career of victory they trod upon the “Soil of France,” could not always refrain from ironically applying to it the enemy's own epithet, which they had wrested from him the pretension to use any longer.

† The Honourable Sir William Stewart; who commanded the Second Division of Infantry.

‡ The Earl of Dalhousie; who commanded the seventh Division of Infantry.

§ The Earl of Hopetoun; who commanded the Left Corps of the Army in 1813 and 14, after the departure of Lord Lynedock to command the forces in Flanders.

|| Lord Lynedock; who commanded at Cadiz in 1810, at the Battle of Barrosa in 1811; and the Left Corps of the Army in 1812 and 13.

And Hope, thy faithful Hope, whose manly
tear

Streamed in deep anguish on thy bloody bier,
Who hung the trophy of undying fame,
With friendship's pious hand around thy name,
Then grasped the sword, and bade thy shade
arise,

To revel in the promised sacrifice.

Græme too—Sebastian's crumbling walls pro-
claim

The far subduing prowess of the Græme ;
The chief whom Cadiz saw renowned in fight,
Whose course has been like Phæbus' race of
light ;—

From clouds and mists the shining beam was
born,

When sorrow's night gave place to glory's morn ;
High blazed the splendour of the noontide day,
And vivid brightness marks his westward ray,
Lo where he plants upon the Pyrenees
The flag that waves in proud Barrosa's breeze.

There hung the phalanx terrible and bright,
A threatening torrent on the mountain's height,
Prepared to rend with desolating sweep,
A thundering pathway down the dizzy steep.
All-conquering Wellington ! what joy was thine
As gleamed thy glance along that kindling line ;
Swelled not thy heart with retrospective pride
To trace their giant course from Tejo's side,
And view thy triumphs, where the hydra foes
In hot succession on thy path arose ?

The force of nature, and the wiles of art,
Combined in vain to daunt that steadfast heart ;
The conquest-nurtured warriors of the Gaul,
The steel-fenced turret and embattled wall,
The guarded pass, the rapid stream's extent,
Alike to thy controlling genius bent.

Even the dark passions of the human breast
Bow to thy mandate and subside to rest :
Behold the proud unbending sons of Spain
With pleased obedience follow in thy train,
With transport greet thy step approaching near,
And pour the exulting " Viva " on thine ear ;
While the sure hope of deathless victory
Throbs in each British pulse and lightens in the
eye.

There gallant Pakenham* oft in danger tried,
The sword and pen with equal zeal supplied,
While in his breast with emulation strove
A hero's ardour and a brother's love.

* The Honourable Sir Edward Pakenham, Deputy Adjutant General of the Army in the earlier Campaigns of the Peninsular War ;—Adjutant General of it in those of 1813 and 14 ; and who frequently commanded a Division of Infantry, as at the Battle of Salamanca, &c. He was brother to the Duchess of Wellington.

There enterprising Hill and active Cole,*
Bold Picton,† Altent‡ of impetuous soul,
Clinton,§ and many a chief of dauntless eye,
The least a star in glory's galaxy,
Curb the hot steed, and poise the burnished
brand,

While proudly marshals each his warrior band.
Just vengeance whets the Lusian soldiers' sword,
Led by their loved, their valiant Beresford :||

(By Erin sent to bless another soil,
A native lion formed to martial toil,)
His careful hand through many a weary day,
Trained and prepared them for the future fray.
Lo ! the bright trophy on that warlike shield !

Thine, Beresford, was Albuera's field :
Down to posterity's remotest line,
The glories of that awful day shall shine.

Though Death appeared clad in his wildest form,
Though all his spirits rode upon the storm,
Though thunder answered to thy cannon's roar,
Mixed with war's crimson tide though torrents
pour,

Though tenfold rage inspired the might of Gaul,
Thy star pre-eminent o'ercame them all !
When to immortalize this wondrous age,
Some future Camæns pens the classic page,
Thy honoured name the glowing line shall
grace,

Supporting pillar of the Lusian race.
Thy steps they followed through admiring
Spain,

And stamped their might in many a crimson
stain ;
Till the bright blade thou taught'st their arm to
wield,

Now gleams terrific o'er the Gallic field.
D'Urban¶ is there, with Hardinge** at his side,
In patient skill and daring deed allied ;
They watched the flame, and fanned it in its
rise,

Prompt to arrange, direct, and organize,
Till all-matured, and plunging in the fight,
The harvest of their toil they reaped in stern
delight.

* The Honourable Sir Galbraeth Lowrey Cole ; who commanded the fourth Division of Infantry.

† Sir Thomas Picton ; who commanded the third Division of Infantry.

‡ Count Charles Alten ; who commanded the Light Division of Infantry.

§ Sir Henry Clinton ; who commanded the sixth Division of Infantry.

|| Field Marshal Lord Beresford, Commander in Chief of the Portuguese Forces ; who commanded the Allied Army at the Battle of Albuera, and the Centre Column of the Army in the Campaigns of 1813 and 14.

¶ Sir Benjamin D'Urban ; Quarter Master General of the Portuguese forces.

** Sir Henry Hardinge ; Deputy Quarter Master General of the Portuguese forces.

St. Marcial's towering hills shall long retain
The record bright of renovated Spain ;
Cheered by the smile of Wellington she stood,
Firm as the rocky tenant of the flood,
While labouring up the mount her ancient foe,
Rose in dark numbers from the plain below ;
Then with impetuous and o'erwhelming sweep
She charged the routed phalanx down the steep ;
Nor ceased the keen pursuit till in the wave
Each foe had found a refuge or a grave.—

Proud Roncesvalles ! famed in martial song,
Thy trembling caves were destined to prolong
The bugle blast of a more fatal horn
Than that "on Fontarabian echoes borne."
From thy tall heights how beauteous was the scene !

Here the rich vineyard bends its graceful screen,
There lofty trees and flowery shrubs are spread,
And the white mansion lifts its stately head,
The frequent streamlets yet uncrimsoned glide,
And murmur to the peaceful bowers beside ;
While from his rural cot the harmless swain
Eyes the rich promise of the golden grain,
Yet trembles at the living thunder cloud
Whose awful folds the mountains' summit
shroud,

Where Britain's meteor standard gleams afar,
Like the portent of some red blazing star ;—
And nearer it approaches, while on high
Ascend the shout and martial minstrelsy ;
Yes, England's heroes to the charge advance,—
Woe to the tyrant ! woe to faithless France !
She views her close-wedged columns wide and deep,

Expand like gathered clouds with fearful sweep,
Still destined like their sires of other times,
By righteous heaven to scourge proud Gallia's crimes.

She sees the sabre flashing to the ray,
Hears the fierce war-horse breathe th' impatient
neigh ;

Already does she feel her trembling plains
Shrink from the pressure of the ponderous wains,
Whose iron tubes unsparingly shall pour
On the Destroyer's head, destruction's shower ;
Wider and fiercer rolls th' invading flood ;
The thirsty soil absorbs her bravest blood—
Long shall her peasants shudder o'er the tale
That tells the sanguine glories of Nivelle,
Whose many a vine-clad hill and proud chateau
Resounded back the thunder of the foe.

—Marshal of France ! still dost thou idly dream
To cope with him—the Chief of Douro's stream ?
Bold is thy heart, and able is thy hand,—
Combine thy powers, and charge the British
band ;

Charge home upon their left—there Hope
shall greet

Thy fierce approaches with a welcome meet
What ! canst thou not dislodge that little force,
Nor check one moment their determin'd course ?
Then summon all thy enterprize and skill,
There, on the right, is well-remembered Hill—
Rush with o'erwhelming force, and bid the Nive
The mangled bodies of thy foes receive :—
Vain is thy utmost rage ! as well thy might
Shall hurl upon the vale yon mountain's height ;
Repulsed, defeated, to thy holds retire,
In long accustomed pangs of unavailing ire !—
What angry river heaves his billows high,
And roars defiance as he thunders by ?
Ardour in vain those swelling waves shall rear,
The Lords of Ocean in their might appear !
Awded by the potent sceptre of the main,
The furious tides their raging course restrain,
While wonderous skill and force uniting bore
The bold invaders to the farthest shore.
Then winding Pau upon her banks might trace
The transient struggle and continued chace,
While Beresford, Hill, Stewart, Alten, Cole,
Picton, and Clinton, like a deluge roll—
Again the Gaul, in obstinate despair,
Pauses and hovers on the heights of Aire ;—
But ill may Soult brave Stewart's arm sustain,
That checked his pride on Albuera's plain,
And hurls with practised might the withering
bolt amain.

Another stream appears in sparkling pride,
Where mingled fleets of various nations ride ;
Garonne—O source and promise of repose !
Europe shall rest from her unnumbered woes—
Crown of their toils, reward of every pain,
Blest proof our heroes had not fought in vain ;
What throbs of joy each gallant heart confessed,
What tenfold transport thrilled each patriot
breast,

When o'er the dancing billows of Garonne
High waved the milk-white standard of Bour-
bon.

O ye, the instruments of God's high will,
The fate of nations destined to fulfil,
The scourge of tyrants, succour of the weak !
In vain the feeble muse your deeds would speak ;
O'er many a hard-won triumph she has passed
Untold, but not unfelt :—whose fame shall last,
When the weak hand that dares this sketch
essay

For ages shall have join'd its native clay ;
Rest, and exult in your unnumbered spoils,
And view the golden harvest of your toils.

When confidence and peace were given again
To the glad vales of Portugal and Spain,

The bright example of your martial fire
Bade Liberty's rekindling flame aspire ;
The Hollander, too long enduring, broke,
With one indignant burst, the galling yoke.
The Northern Eagles learned their might to
know,

And soared terrific o'er the shrinking foe.
The Russian came—in one imperial hand
Stern Justice bade him wave the vengeful
brand ;

Peace in the other placed her verdant palm,
And mercy steeped it in her holy balm.
Austria's bright numbers gleamed along the
plain,

And swelled to awful force the threatening train.
The soil of Frederic, worthy of his sway,
Where half-restrained, indignant valour lay,
Now heard the signal, and with rushing pride
Poured thundering forth her bold and eager tide ;
What foe so brave but owned the throb of dread
When Prussia followed where her Blucher led ?
That wonderous chief upon whose veteran brow
The honours of his northern winter flow—
A fearful winter, terrible in form,
Whose hand the "whirlwind drives and hurls
the storm."

The hardy Swede with glowing bosom came,
To share the field of danger and of fame.—
In one dread mass, for one high deed combined
They march, avengers of the human kind,
Astonished France the wonderous vision viewed,
Her barriers forced, her bravest sons subdued ;
An instant sees the mighty havoc cease,
And hears the victor's question — War, or
Peace ?

"Twixt trembling hope, dark fear, and cold mis-
trust,
She faltered,—Heaven in thunder cried "Be
just !"

The awful voice is heard—the struggle o'er—
One moment passed—Oppression was no more !

But where are they, Britannia's victor crew ?
Rest they the triumphs of their hand to view ?
Alas ! unconscious of the glad result,
In one last, fruitless victory they exult ;
And bitterest tears the drooping laurel stain,—
Those gallant hearts for once have bled in vain.
Weep on—how soothing are the tears that flow,
When grateful nations press to share our woe !
—O who can speak the numbers of the slain,
To rich Toulouse from Cadiz' distant plain ?
Nameless and low, their warrior graves abound,
Where their free life-blood fertilized the ground :
There rescued lands upon their deeds shall
dwell,

And tale and song their high achievements tell ;
There on his cloud each warrior's ghost shall sail,
And murmur notes of triumph in the gale,

While, far removed, to fond affection's eyes,
By fancy's power each grass-clad sod shall rise :
The childless mother dwell upon the theme,
The widow see it in her broken dream ;
Oft from her restless couch convulsive start,
And snatch her sleeping infant to her heart,
Prepared to bend before that visioned grave,
For ever closed upon the fond and brave ;
To wander o'er the ne'er-forgotten plain,
And seek for one among ten thousand slain.
The vision flies—she sinks, but not to sleep,
Her only luxury to think and weep.
Still on each spot the sacred laurels bloom,
And cypress sheds its melancholy gloom ;
The laurel flourishes luxuriant there,
And lifts its whitening foliage to the air ;
Sweet plant ! so gracefully thou had'st not stood,
But thou wert nurtured with those heroes' blood.

Ye living brave, whose hearts with rapture burn,
Britannia's pride to her glad arms return :
O haste to greet the soil for ever free,
And say "We conquered, toiled, and bled for
thee."—

What eager crowds will throng with fond ac-
claim,
The shore re-echoing to each well known name !

O Albion ! ever blessed be thy sod :—
"Blessed is the land that calls the Lord her
God."

Not unto thee, fair Island, not to thee
The praise, the honour and the glory be ;
But to the Lord thy God, thy saving light,
Who filled thy heart with faith, thine arm with
might ;

'Twas He that raised the tyrant of the hour,
To scourge the nations and exalt His power,
While thou wert made the instrument of good,
To close th' allotted day of rage and blood.
We must not raise our grateful hymns to thee,
For "Twas the Lord who triumphed gloriously."

If thou hast stood when Death his flag unfurled,
Firm as the steadfast centre of the world ;
If thou hast sent thy naval sons to ride
Acknowledged sovereigns of the ocean tide ;
If thy unconquered troops have strode afar,
Lords of the fight, and masters of the war ;
If thou hast found thine own unaided land
Supply with endless means thy liberal hand ;
If Freedom on thy shore is throned so high,
That slavery can but touch the strand, and
die :—

O bend Britannia to the Lord of Heaven,
Whose High Right Hand these glorious gifts
hath given,
And bid thy oft-assembled thousands raise
The swelling note of Joy, the choral hymn of
Praise.

THE CONVENT BELL.

A TALE.



CANTO I.

I.

HARK! to the distant Convent Bell,
That rolls its deep and solemn knell
Upon the passing breeze :
The choral strain has died away,
And the last taper's glimmering ray
Has faded from the trees.
Again the silver moon-beams rest
Unbroken on the mountain's breast
That rises in majestic grace,
And nought beneath the midnight beam
Is heard, save yonder winding stream,
That murmurs at its base.

II.

It is not long since this lone glen
Rang to the tread of armed men.
Britons they were, whose blood had dyed
The Douro's rushing wave,
When many a crest of martial pride
Found by that gloomy torrent's side
A low and silent grave.
The Conqueror had drawn his train
Back tow'rd Abrantes height,
From thence to succour trembling Spain,
With his collected might.
This was a little wounded band,
Who left beneath Oporto's towers,
Had risen with renovated powers,
And longed to grasp the vengeful brand,
And by their peerless Wellealey led,
Wreak Europe's wrongs on Gallia's head.

III.

Their Chief was one whom glory's call
Had tempted from his father's hall,
In manhood's early prime ;
He left his Erin's emerald Isle,
The charms of home, and beauty's smile,
The steeps of fame to climb ;
And well his warlike deeds might grace
The glories of his ancient race.

Touch but his heart with patriot ire,
His dark eye flashed a living fire,
And his firm front withstood,
In dauntless brow, the cannon's blaze ;—
Unmov'd that steadfast eye could gaze
On his own streaming blood,
And, fainting on the field, his glance
Defied the foe's pretended lance,
In stern unaltered mood.

IV.

But when in that expressive eye,
The beam of sensibility
Resumed its wonted reign,
'Twas soft as eve's reflected sky
Upon the watery plain,
When storms that heaved the waves on high
Have sunk to rest again.
A sabre wound brave Ronald bore,
Of late from Douro's blood-stained shore,
Which was but scantily healed ;
Though now, impatient of delay,
He heads his comrades' bright array,
And leads them to the field.

V.

With buoyant spirits light as air,
A bounding heart untouched by care,
With sparkling eye, and polished brow,
And downy cheek of healthful glow,
The young Fitz-Arthur came ;—
A sprightlier youth of courage free
Ne'er graced the lists of chivalry,
Nor sought the fields of fame.
His smile was gay as summer flowers,
His heart was soft as vernal showers,
And all of noble, good, sincere,
In that unclouded mind appear.—

VI.

It boots not here to tell the name
Of each from Douro's banks that came ;
Suffice it they were hearts as brave
As ever crossed the azure wave,

From Britain's chalky shore,
As ever taught her foes to feel
The force of that terrific steel,
Her conquering legions bore.
From Albion's cultivated plain,
From Erin's verdant sod,
From Caledonia's mountain reign,
They came to rescue falling Spain
From the Usurper's rod.
Oporto saw the earnest given—
Saw her detested foes
Forth from her walls in panic driven,
While to the favouring breeze of heaven
St. George's banner rose.

VII.

The little band by Ronald led
Bent to this glen their dubious tread,
As the fourth sun at evening smiled;
And here their burnished arms they piled,
And sate them on the ground to share
The patient soldier's simple fare.
Soft was the summer eve,—it stole
With soothing charm o'er Ronald's soul;
—"Seest thou Fitz Arthur, where the beam
Arrays yon mountain's lofty brow?
Mark how that glory's living stream
Gilds the high broken ridge, and now
'Tis gone,—and see the dazzling sky,
A gold and purple canopy,
Reflected on the streamlet's face,
And vying with the gorgeous flowers,
That nature in this lonely place
Has strewed, to shame our richest bowers.

VIII.

"O why should man's inconstant heart
Prefer the gilded wiles of art,
Unmindful of the whispering voice
That woos him to a nobler choice?
Why shuns he still the lowly dell,
Where truth and contemplation dwell,
And seeks the gaudy edifice,
By pampered folly reared to vice;
Viewing with cold and languid eye
The glories of the evening sky,
And pining for the midnight glare,
The wild debauch,—The poisoned snare
That dwells in pleasure's syren breath,
And lures to infamy and death?
—O let me still unshackled rove,
With nature, friendship, peace, and love,
To guide me on my way!
The tranquil wish, the classic page,
Shall bless my youth and cheer my age,
And consecrate my clay."—

IX.

The rich and variegated dye,
Was fading from the evening sky;

More clear and strong the moonbeam played,
Where in the olive's chequered shade,
Each weary soldier sought repose
Beside the rippling stream,
While to his wandering fancy rose
The home-restoring dream;
One watchful sentry paced alone,
And carolled in a low-breathed tone
The ditty of his native vale;
While, sweeping cross the mountain's side,
To his half-uttered song replied
In murmurs soft, the freshening gale.

X.

But Ronald slept not;—o'er his frame
By starts a shuddering chillness came:
For spurning soon at soft repose,
Impetuous from his couch he rose,
Ere the skilled Leech might well assuage
The fury of the fever's rage;
His half-closed wound had pained him sore,
Beneath the parching ray,
Yet silently the pang he bore,
And seemed alert and gay.
Reclined upon a rising ground,
He now his throbbing brow unbound,
To court the cooling breeze,
Then wrapped his martial cloak around,
And in calm contemplation found
A momentary ease.
But fiercer and more frequent came
Those varying starts of chill and flame,
And faint and fainter drooped his head.
The sentry marked with pain and grief
The sufferings of his patient Chief,
And sought Fitz-Arthur's verdant bed;—
In whom for Ronald's weal he viewed
A brother's fond solicitude.
But vain ev'n friendship's soothing hand,
And vainly pressed his faithful band,
They could not calm the panting strife,
Where death seemed combating with life;—
A warmer couch was quickly spread,
A softer pillow propped his head,
But ghastly was the languid smile,
That sought to thank their zealous toil.

XI.

Fitz-Arthur searched with piercing ken
The deep recesses of the glen;—
"Is there no hut?" he cried,
"No succour can the soil afford,
To him who in her quarrel poured
His life-blood's flowing tide?
O Ronald must thou helpless lie,
Exposed beneath th' unpying sky?
Were earth's whole surface mine,
I'd freely give th' extended space,
Beneath one sheltering roof to place
That gallant head of thine!"—

The tear his glistening eye confessed
Shamed not his helmet's lofty crest.

XII.

Once more that wild in moonlight grey,
His anxious glances scan,
Yet naught is there which can bewray
The near abode of man.
He only sees the glittering stream,
That sports and dances in the beam,
Hears but the loitering waters play
Among the rocks with fond delay,
While on its banks the olive trees
Sigh to the whispers of the breeze.—

XIII.

Whence came that deep and startling sound,
So sudden, clear, and strong,
Which from the craggy rocks around
A thousand caves prolong?
"It is—it is a CONVENT BELL!"
And up the mountain side,
Fitz-Arthur started from the dell,
With quick and eager stride,
And followed through the tangled ground
The guidance of that welcome sound.
Onward he pressed his trackless way,
Along the steep ascent,
Where scattered rocks opposing lay,
From the dark mountain rent;
But each rude bulwark lightly passed,
His venturous step is fixed at last
On such commanding height,
That every object placed below
The precipice's frowning brow,
Is spread before his sight.

XIV.

Down from his dizzy post he bends
A glance of eager hope,
To where the peaceful vale extends,
Beyond that mountain's slope,
Unbroken, save by rocks that lay,
Hurling downward by the tempest's sway,
On whose fantastic shapes the beam
Casts with full force its radiant stream,
And shows in mingled light and gloom,
The ruined tower, the sculptured tomb;
With all the forms that fancy brings
To people her ideal reign,
When night her mystic mantle flings
O'er the dim groves, and shadowy plain.
The glen is open to the right,
And thither tends his eager sight:
There in the bright unclouded ray,
The silver stream pursues its way,
And winds along through orange bowers,
Whose golden fruit and pearly flowers,
Breathes their rich perfumed sigh,

And shine amid the foliaged shade,
Like heaven's bright host of stars displayed
On evening's purple sky.
There blooms, remote from rude alarms,
The signal of the Patriarch's Dove,
And myrtles form with bending arms
A bower might grace the Queen of Love;
While with their depth of green entwines
The lighter hue of clustering vines.
And far remote, and towering high,
The dark Sierra meets the sky,
Forming, with wild majestic screen,
A giant barrier to the scene,
Where yet no human step intrudes,
To break its awful solitudes.

XV.

But hark! the welcome bell he hears,
Resounding from below;
Down to the left a fane appears,
Which bowered in trees its front uprears,
White as the driven snow.
Blithely the glad Fitz-Arthur blest
The holy seat of pious rest,
As springing toward the sacred ground,
A little beaten track he found,
And reached the outer gate;
And when the porter's bell he plies,
His panting breath will scarce suffice
His errand to relate.

XVI.

—"A weary march, a wounded friend,
No Leech his skilful aid to lend,
No hospitable roof in view—"
The porter to the fane withdrew,
To move the Lady Abbess' ruth,
For succour to the stranger youth,
And soon within the wicket grate,
Fitz-Arthur might espy,
A holy Friar, whose solemn gait,
And shading cowl bespcke his state,
Priest of the Sanctuary.
He doffs his helm with courteous grace,
And to the Father bends,
Then seeks with wistful glance to trace
What hope his suit attends;
While in persuasive accents dressed,
The tale of Ronald's fate
Ends with a prayer to grant him rest
Within that holy gate.

XVII.

—"Stranger! this consecrated pile
Safe from the sacrilegious foe,
Our Country freed from bondage vile,
The dawn of Peace and Plenty's smile,
To thy protecting arms we owe:
And shall St. Clara's gates be closed
Against our brave Allies,

Wounded and tired, and all exposed
 Beneath the midnight skies?
 Forbid it Heaven! A litter straight—
 Torches!—and open wide the gate.—
 Now warrior wilt thou lead these men
 Down yonder path? there lies the glen:
 Mean time will I, with needful care
 Due succour for thy friend prepare,
 A lodging for thy train:—
 No time for thanks,—nay, haste away,
 Brave Ronald feels thy long delay:—
 We soon shall meet again.”—

CANTO II.

I.

WHEN Ronald ope'd his eyes on day,
 The fever's rage had passed away,
 And though exhausted, faint, and weak,
 Well could his smiling looks bespeak
 Surprise and gratitude,
 When in the good Confessor's hand,
 That touched his own with gesture bland,
 The healing draught he viewed;
 And saw his kind Fitz-Arthur bend,
 In triumph o'er his rescued friend.
 For when they bore their cherished freight,
 Last evening to the convent gate,
 Insensible he lay;
 So dark and dead his slumber seemed,
 That for a while Fitz-Arthur deemed
 The soul had passed away.

II.

Few words the passing scene explain,
 “And now” Bernardo said,
 “The Lady Abbess does ordain,
 That here a captive you remain,
 Till medicine's potent aid,
 Shall give you strength, again to wield
 Your heaven-sent arms in victory's field.
 By easy march, your little band
 May muster to the chief's command,
 Long ere he moves again,
 And you, my gallant Sir, to tend
 With me upon your wounded friend,
 May yet awhile remain;
 Your men shall have a trusty guide,
 While a fleet messenger shall ride,
 And to the British camp repair,
 Due tidings of your state to bear.”—

III.

Fitz-Arthur, voluble and gay,
 Now rattled thoughtlessly away
 By smiling Ronald's side;

His ramble through the moonlight glade,
 And the Confessor's ready aid,
 A copious theme supplied.
 And ardently he longed to pry
 Within the Convent cells,
 And feast his bold unhallowed eye,
 Where in St. Clara's sanctuary,
 Each veil-clad votress dwells.
 He railed against the bigot sway
 That doomed them to despair,
 And mused if they were old and grey,
 Or gentle, young, and fair;
 And vowed it was his high resolve
 These doubts by force or fraud to solve.

IV.

As evening closed Bernardo came,
 With greeting in the Abbess' name,
 —“She longs to hear the tale,
 From whence your wandering footsteps strayed,
 To shelter in the lonely shade
 Of this sequestered vale:
 And of Britannia's victor host,
 Whose daring step so lately ceased
 Her native Douro's stream,
 And sooth to say she reckons most
 On that inspiring theme
 And when your pious steps incline
 To seek our house of prayer,
 And view St. Clara's holy shrine,
 She bids me guide you there.”—

V.

A purer heart, a kinder soul,
 Ne'er dwelt beneath the monkish cowl;
 Much had he read, and studied long,
 And sighed for the misguided throng
 Who follow some unworthy prize
 His pious wisdom could despise.
 Peaceful and mild, and innocent,
 His philosophic days were spent;
 St. Clara's grace to him had given
 To lead her sister-train to heaven,
 But no high pride of power or place
 Sate in his smooth brow's ample space;
 In his blue eye, of pensive thought,
 The ray of love and mercy shone,
 Prompt to excuse a brother's fault,
 But never lenient to his own.

VI.

Another day is come and gone,—
 The setting sun's effulgence shone,
 Where through the latticed casement hung
 The richly clustering vine,
 And the clear vesper-bell has rung,
 Its summons to the shrine.
 His solemn pace Bernardo bends
 To the huge iron gate,

While on his step the following friends
 In expectation wait.
 The well-paved court is quickly passed,
 Within whose spacious square,
 The fountain's crystal waters cast
 Refreshment on the air.
 The folding gate is open thrown,
 And a long corridor of stone
 Ends in the massy doors, which bound
 The chapel's consecrated ground.
 The beams of countless tapers play
 On the arched roof and fretwork gay ;—
 St. Clara's shrines the centre space
 In lofty pomp supplies,
 While numerous altars round the place
 In less proportion rise ;
 The Priest is there in vestment white
 To minister the sacred rite.

VII.

Foremost within the right-hand grate,
 The Abbess sits in silent state,
 And by her side, an ancient race,
 The veteran nuns of eldest place :
 Farther and more retired from view,
 Are those whose fatal vows are new,
 Each in her separate stall ;
 And yonder small light forms declare,
 Young novices and boarders there,
 Await the holy call.
 A pitying glance and heart-breathed sigh
 The gallant strangers gave,
 For sad it was to British eye
 To see such flowerets droop and die
 Within a living grave :
 They thought upon their native Isles,
 Where beauty's warm endearing smiles
 Should welcome home the brave.

VIII.

But every reasoning power was bound
 Within a magic spell,
 When the rich choral strains resound
 From that secluded cell ;
 Unnumbered voices, sweet and clear,
 Burst forth upon the raptured ear :
 And one there was among the rest,
 That thrilled through either listener's breast,—
 It came not loud nor strong,
 But with a soft seraphic tone,
 A melting sweetness all its own,
 It would the note prolong ;
 Sometimes in holy ecstasy
 It pealed the Hallelujah high :
 Then sunk to such low dying fall
 As might beseech the sinner's call,
 And prayer to be forgiven ;
 Then rose again, as though in air
 An angel winged her way, to bear
 The rescued soul to heaven.

IX.

With eager eye and throbbing breast,
 To view the chauntress Ronald pressed,
 For every note those lips had poured
 Found in his soul its kindred chord ;
 He looked in vain—the gentle choir
 That moment from the grate retire,
 And leave in Ronald's heart alone
 The echo of that heavenly tone.

X.

Bernardo's evening office o'er,
 They left the chapel's closing door.
 "What sweet celestial voices grace,"
 Fitz-Arthur cried, "your vestal race !
 It were a foolish risque to wage,
 If longer I should stay ;
 There is a bird in yonder cage,
 Might sing my heart away."—
 The good Confessor sadly smiled,
 "It was St. Clara's darling child,
 The flower of all her train,
 From whose pure lips so meek and mild
 Arose that vesper strain."
 "And did that witching songstress dwell
 From childhood in the cloistered cell ?"—
 Bernardo shook his head and sighed,
 "Such was her destined fate ;
 In infant beauty's earliest pride,
 A Father willed that gem to hide
 Within the holy grate,
 Where from the false world's sinful lure
 She dwelt in sacred peace secure.—

XI.

"Ye British warriors, well ye know
 How erst our dark unpitying foe
 In the fierce rage of conquest came,
 And dealt round havoc, blood, and flame.
 One tide of terror rolled o'er all,
 And from the convent's sheltering wall
 The helpless nuns were driven,—
 To shun a fate more horrible
 Than holy lips may bear to tell,
 They braved the storms of heaven,
 And wandered houseless, shelterless,
 In all the anguish of distress.

XII.

"The Convent where Maria dwelt
 The fierce assassin's fury felt ;
 Scarcely the nuns could speed their flight,
 Ere the Destroyers came,
 And their wild path was rendered bright
 By their own dwelling's flame.
 Maria's native palace stood
 Two leagues beyond a spreading wood,
 And to that sheltering fane

Their steps in trembling haste they bent,
 Nor heeded as they onward went
 The wind and driving rain.
 All torn with thorns, and galling stones,
 Maria led the weary ones
 That night to her paternal hall ;
 They came—one aged man they found,
 Whose faltering lips could scarcely sound
 The tidings of his master's fall !

XIII.

" Too bitter were the task to tell,
 What toils that hapless maid befel,
 Until in this sequestered dell
 A safe retreat was given ;
 And ye have heard how saintly swell
 Her notes of praise to Heaven.
 Her father's fall by foes betrayed,
 The horrors of that frantic flight,
 Have cast a sad and mournful shade
 O'er her pure spirit's native light ;
 But mild Religion's holy balm
 Has soothed it to a pensive calm ;
 And Oh ! within this sheltering wall,
 So may her days glide by,
 Till Heaven shall in its mercy call
 An angel to the sky !" —

XIV.

His hands upon his breast he crossed,
 And in the mental prayer was lost.
 The fire was bright in Ronald's eye,
 The glow was on his cheek,
 And his clenched hand spontaneously
 Seemed his good sword to seek.
 " Aye, let us meet," Fitz-Arthur cried,
 " Once more these dogs of hell,
 And thou and I, still side by side,
 A vengeful tale will tell !"
 Bernardo raised his pensive head,
 And the stern frown beheld,
 The lightning glance that proudly said
 Your foemen shall be quelled.
 Kindly he grasped their offered hands,—
 " Conquest already crowns your toil,—
 The blood of those invading bands
 Has streamed upon our ravaged soil ;
 Well have ye fought, and freely bled,
 Be Lusía's blessing on your head !"

XV.

Another morning dawns—" Arise !
 Ronald uncloze those drowsy eyes :
 The Abbess in her chair of state
 Will shortly our approaches wait ;
 Come invoke the Graces' aid,—
 For many a day is gone,
 Since on our forms, in gay parade,
 Fair ladies' dances shone.

Our brows have felt the hand of care,
 Our coats are somewhat worse for wear,
 But when our knightly tale is told,
 They'll say we're gallants true and bold." —

XVI.

Silent and sad his friend arose
 From short and unrefreshing rest,
 The tale of fair Maria's woes
 Was heavy on his breast ;
 That voice so soft and so resigned
 Still floated on his ear,
 As to the half-awakened mind
 Our morning dreams appear.
 Yet could he not but smile to view
 His comrade's earnest face,
 Brightening his garments' faded hue,
 Pluming his war-worn casque anew,
 The long-expected interview
 In martial pomp to grace.
 His short crisp locks of chestnut brown
 Shade his unruffled brow,
 Unconscious of the surly frown,
 Or self-reproving glow :
 His tall and well proportioned form
 The sculptor's art might grace,
 And the heart's glow, sincere and warm
 Was beaming o'er his face :
 An arch and animated smile
 His lips would oft divide,
 And never did the word of guile
 From their frank portals glide.

XVII.

Of riper years, and manlier prime,
 Stood Ronald ;—his dark pensive eye
 Spoke the high soul, the thought sublime,
 That dwelt on immortality.
 The scholar's lore, and sober sense,
 Mingled with mild benevolence,
 And all that polished grace can give,
 In those expressive features live.
 His light and active form combines
 Strength, dignity, and ease,
 And the bold martial spirit shines,
 Though gentleness the fire refines,
 Mild as the summer breeze.—

XVIII.

Bernardo at the appointed hour
 Attends them to the gate,
 Where throned in plenitude of power
 The Abbess holds her state.
 The crucifix and holy bead
 Are glittering at her side,
 And in her steadfast look they read
 A trait of conscious pride,—
 But naught repulsive or severe
 Lours, as her grateful guests draw near

Ranged on their lowly forms around,
With modest glance that seeks the ground,

The gentle nuns are seen ;
And many a sparkling eye was there,
And many a cheek of beauty rare,

With soft and graceful mien :
Their robes and veils of spotless white
Descend in folds of waving light.
The welcome given, with gracious smile,
The Abbess craves a boon,—

“ Would but their brave Allies beguile
The sultry hour of noon,
With tidings of the recent fight,
That quelled proud Gaul's detested might ! ”—
Back she has thrown the shading veil,
While thus they tell the glorious tale.

CANTO III.

VICTORY OF THE DOURO.

I.

RONALD.

“ Tago's emancipated stream
Beheld our burnished weapons gleam,
Nor yet their dazzling blades display
The sanguine dye of battle fray,
Though the succeeding leagues disclose
The path of our remorseless foes.
The ravaged field, the trampled vine,
The smoking hut, their step declare,
With many a dark and fearful sign
That murder's crimson hand was there.
In horror, hunger, nakedness,
The remnant from their coverts crept,
And prayed the Lord our arms to bless,
While frantically they wept,
O'er the retrieveless scene of spoil,
The wreck of their industrious toil.

II.

“ I cannot speak, O holy Dame !
How fiercely blazed th' indignant flame
In every heart with pity wrung,
While ' Vengeance ' burst from every tongue !
Impatient at the long delay,
And burning for the fight,
Northward we urged our threatening way,
Till Vouga's rising banks display
The spirit-cheering sight ;
For there in soaring pride arose
The eagles of our ruthless foes.
How brightly then in every eye
Gleamed the sure hope of victory !
And bright o'er all, resplendent shone
Our Wellesley's piercing glance,

When in his conquest-boding tone
He bade our ranks advance.

III.

“ As bloodhounds who have tracked their prey
Through the wild wood's uncertain way,
When lo ! before their glaring eyes,
Th' exhausted foe more faintly flies,—
Rises each bristling hair—they strain
Headlong across the open plain,
And deem their fangs already dyed
In the lost murderer's crimson tide :
So eager and so fierce we stand,
So dart we at the chief's command.
Routed at every point, they yield
Before our desperate way,
And masters of the chosen field,
We wait th' approaching day,
That promises a sterner fight,
Vengeance more full, and fame more bright.

IV.

“ Reluctantly the morn arose,
To chase that glowing dream,
And show our dark and crafty foes
Beyond the Douro's stream.
The floating path from strand to strand
Their cautious care had riven,
And far from either hostile band
The broken fragments driven.
Abrupt and high the banks appear,
Within whose narrow space
Old Douro holds, in swift career,
His never-ceasing race.
Such mighty bonds on either side
As Nature's careful hand supplied
To curb the torrent's force,
Alone could chain the rapid tide,
And check its hurrying course.
A yellow tinge the waters wear,
As rushing on their way,
From the imprisoning banks they tear
The scanty soil and clay.
A weary task the boatman plies,
Against th' opposing stream,—
Or with the favouring current flies,
Swift as the passing dream ;
But now each straggling boat they moor,
Securely to the farther shore :
No practicable ford extends
O'er the rude gulf between,
Save the wild rocks Avintas lends,
—Too distant from the scene !—
Less sullenly the tiger growls
O'er his contested food,
'Reft of her young, less fiercely scowls
The empress of the wood,
Than our indignant warriors eyed,
And cursed, the intercepting tide.

But Wellesley's ardent mind the while
 Teemed with the glorious plan,—
 Nor mightiest force, nor craftiest guile,
 Can foil that wond'rous man :
 He bids the impatient band divide,—
 One part along the river's side
 Must seek Avintas' ford,
 The rest remain, their chance abide,
 And wait his leading word.

V.

"Hark ! that glad shout !—with daring hand,
 The gallant Lusians from the strand
 Two ample boats unmoor,—
 Turn, gracious Heaven, the balls aside
 That shower around, while through the tide
 They struggle for the shore !
 Safely they cross, and safely reach
 Our shouting comrades on the beach ;
 And freighted to the full, each boat
 Once more is on the stream afloat,
 While ranged upon the strand,
 Our thundering guns their volley send,
 And with repeated roar defend
 The dauntless little band.

VI.

"Lost in the fixed astonished gaze
 Of stupid wonder and amaze,—
 Or scorning the inferior force,
 No foe opposed their daring course ;
 Till from a ruined building nigh,
 Brave Paget sends defiance high
 To their o'erwhelming power ;
 Then, starting from their fatal trance,
 They bid a numerous force advance,
 And tear us from the tower.

VII.

"It was a College Hall that gave
 This timely shelter to the brave,
 And there defensively they form,
 And coolly 'bide the coming storm.
 It comes, in deep compacted cloud :—
 It bursts with detonation loud,
 And streams upon the battered walls,
 Through sulphurous flash, a shower of balls ;
 But as our Albion's caverned rock
 Responds the thunder's roar,
 And dashes, with indignant shock,
 The billows from her shore,
 So truly we return the knell,
 So firmly the advance repel.
 They spring to the surrounding wall,
 And on the marble paved hall
 The well-aimed bullets ring,
 While on succeeding hosts they call,
 Their spreading lines to bring.

Hemmed by the hot assailants round,
 And pierced by many a smarting wound,
 At desperate bay we stand,—
 But not one fainting heart is found,
 Nor one exhausted hand.

VIII.

"Now, echoing loud, the British cheer
 Proclaims a timely succour near,
 As our bold bands from yonder side
 The crimsoned bank attain,
 And bid the enclosing force divide,
 While spreads the combat deep and wide,
 O'er the surrounding plain.
 Aloft our English banners fly,
 Our battle shout ascends the sky ;
 From the fierce charge of pointed steel
 Their awed battalions backward reel,
 Their steady columns bend,
 And Soult already meditates
 The refuge that Oporto's gates
 Reluctantly might lend ;
 When lo ! we point the blood-stained sword,
 Where hastening from Avintas' ford
 Appears a phalanx bright,
 His wavering flank prepared to turn,
 And greet with salutation stern,
 His intercepted flight !"

IX.

FITZ-ARTHUR.

—"Dripping we came," Fitz-Arthur cried,
 For quickly dashed we through the tide,
 Your gallant deeds to crown,—
 And well our moistened garments dried,
 In chasing through the town.
 Ill might the startled Frenchman wait
 To close Oporto's royal gate,
 While we his flying rearward greet,
 And charge them on from street to street ;
 With headlong force and thundering about
 We rushed upon the flying rout,
 And drove them,—till the pitying night
 Cast her dark mantle o'er their flight.

X.

"Ronald, within the College walls,
 Had haply 'scaped the murderous balls,
 And sallying forth, he rushed amain
 The hot pursuit to aid,
 And foremost of the victor train,
 He waved his flashing blade ;
 Till pressing on a well-armed band,
 They turned, and made a stubborn stand—
 'Twas there my gallant friend I found
 Senseless upon the reeking ground."—

XI.

He ceased—and now the Abbess rose,
 To heaven her tearful look she throws,
 "My Daughters," she exclaims, "draw
 nigh ;—
 Lo ! in our favoured dwelling stand
 Two heroes of that godlike band
 Who brought us life and liberty !
 Our shrines from sacrilegious gaze,
 Our walls from desolation's blaze,
 Our bosoms from the sword,
 These have they saved,—our frequent praise
 Hath risen to the Lord,
 And here before the face of heaven,
 Our grateful thanks to them be given."—
 Then many a fair hand clasped on high
 Implored a blessing from the sky ;
 So late by bashfulness subdued,
 The eye now beamed with gratitude,
 And shone with lustre, bright and chaste,
 On each deliverer's form,
 Like the returning moon-beam, cast
 On barks that gallantly have passed
 The perils of the storm.

XII.

—"O long may Heaven's approving smile
 Beam on the lovely sea-girt Isle !" (And Ronald's bounding heart has flown
 To greet that well-remembered tone)
 "Like her majestic oak she stands,
 And spreads her shade o'er other lands,
 While her protecting arms extend
 A refuge for the poor,
 And virtue, strength, and beauty blend,
 Her empire to secure.
 So said my martyred sire, who long
 Strayed her enchanting scenes among."—

XIII.

—"Lady, the touch was warm and true
 That gave that picture to thy view :—
 Deep in the trackless ocean wave,
 Has nature placed Britannia's throne,
 And led the circling tides to lave
 Her fortress wall of pearly stone ;
 In isolated might she stands,
 Girt by her guardian ocean bands.
 Tremendous as her frowning rock,
 Ruin and wreck assail her foes,
 Her barriers brave the rudest shock,
 Her woodlands smile in sweet repose :
 There herds, and flocks, and golden grain,
 Diversify the verdant plain ;
 There towers that monarch oak, and shades
 With patriarchal arms the glades ;
 While many a peaceful cottage shines
 Through wreaths of fragrant eglantines
 The ivy-mantled wall displays
 The majesty of other days,—

Unscathed by force, unharmed by wrong,
 Time gently shakes the mouldering pile,
 And tells how ages roll along
 Unbroken, in that favoured Isle."—

XIV.

Bernardo ! thou hast sought a boon,
 And gained the fatal gift too soon
 From that indulgent dame :
 And daily at the convent grate
 Those dangerous guests of thine may wait,
 The social hour to claim.
 Dost thou not mark the mantling blush,
 That lightens o'er Maria's cheek,
 Nor rapture's corresponding flush
 On Ronald's kindling visage speak ?
 Where was thy ever watching heed ?
 Spell-bound thyself, thou didst not read,
 What rapid clouds and sunbeams chase
 Alternate o'er her varying face,
 While in attention rapt, she hung
 On every accent of his tongue.
 Thou saw'st not that soul-speaking eye,
 Heard'st not the palpitating breath,
 That hailed in speechless ecstasy
 Th' avengers of her father's death.
 Could not thy long observant age,
 Nor lore of thy loved classic page,
 Tell thee that woe the bosom leaves
 Too prone to soft affection's power,
 Even as the dew-steeped grass receives
 Th' impression of the falling flower ?—
 O ! can those grated bars repel
 Love's monarch from the holy cell ?
 His power is throned within the eye,
 His chariot is the viewless sigh,
 He sports with vows, disarms the brave,
 And prizes most th' unwilling slave.
 Alas ! how impotent and frail
 The barrier of the vestal's veil,
 Against the tyrant's fraudulent guile,
 Who couched in friendship's artless smile,
 Unmarked can pass the strong defence
 Of piety and innocence,
 Then fix the everlasting dart,
 And lord it o'er the vanquished heart !
 What boots it that yon warrior's mind
 Is pure as brave, and true as kind ?—
 He cannot crush the potent spell,
 Destined the firmest soul to quell,
 Nor ardent and impetuous youth
 'Gainst passion balance sober truth.
 Beauteous and fair Love's roses grow,
 And fragrant is the breath they breathe,—
 Would but some gentle spirit show,
 In pity of the latent woe,
 The thorns that lurk beneath !

CANTO IV.

I.

O Sympathy! thy witching power,
 From whence our dearest comforts flow,
 Can soothe misfortune's darkest hour,
 Or brim the cup of human woe.
 What words shall tell his misery
 To whom the fatal pang is known,
 To read in the congenial eye
 A heart that must not be his own!
 Fancy awhile may seize the reign,
 And bear him o'er her wide domain,
 And plant his ardent eyes to bless,
 The radiant bowers of happiness;
 But to destroy the fairy scene,
 Cold Duty lifts her wand between,
 And bids an awful barrier swell,
 Impervious, insurmountable;
 While the stern monitor within
 In thunder tells him it were sin
 And frail mortality will strive
 To keep deceitful hope alive,
 Against the will of fate,
 Till to one gloomy thought resigned,
 The once well-regulated mind
 Yields in the vain debate,
 And lost in helpless, hopeless care,
 Sinks a sad victim to despair.

II.

Tall was Maria's form, it rose
 Majestic o'er the rest,—
 A holy peace, a calm repose,
 Her downcast eye expressed.
 Through the long lash that fringed it round,
 A frequent path the tear had found,
 And her wan cheek in pensive grace
 Too well portrayed its recent trace.
 The ringlet that unconscious strayed
 From her confining veil,
 Contrasted with its deep dark shade
 That cheek so fair and pale.
 The arms that crossed her gentle breast
 Hushed the rebellious sigh to rest,—
 And when her meek and quiet eye
 Was lifted to her native sky,
 She seemed some gracious form divine,
 Pourtrayed in chisselled stone,
 If sculptor's hands could e'er combine
 Patience and Faith in one.

III.

Reared in a Convent's peaceful cell,
 She knew not the tempestuous swell
 Of rapture, disappointment, strife,
 That heaves the troubled waves of life:

Yet in her bosom dormant lie
 The sparks that tender sympathy
 May brighten to a flame,
 Could she on one true heart but rest
 The hopes and sorrows of her breast,
 In holy friendship's name:
 So thought she oft, but never yet
 That kind congenial heart had met,
 Though in the Convent's virgin train,
 Were found the giddy, light, and vain,
 The bigot harsh, the prude austere,
 Mixed with the gentle and sincere,
 The timid and the proud,—
 Yet not one perfect sister-mind,
 So pure, so steadfast, and refined,
 She found among the crowd.
 But since St. Clara's shrine had given
 A refuge of repose,
 Bernardo led her mind to heaven,
 To consecrate her woes.
 She loved her grateful voice to raise
 Amid the choral notes of praise,
 And loved to offer when alone
 Her soul before her Maker's throne;
 Dearly she prized the pensive hour,
 Passed in the garden's silent bower,—
 The breeze of heaven that loved to play
 Upon the mourner's cheek,
 Seemed as it dried the tear away,
 Of hope and peace to speak:
 It speaks of Him whose mercy dwells
 On all his hands have made,
 And bids the heart whose sorrow swells
 Repose on Him for aid.
 To every race of mortal kind,
 On angel wings his care is borne,
 Who tempers ev'n the northern wind,
 In pity to the lamb new shorn:
 —O never yet the fleece was rent
 From lamb more meek and innocent!—

IV.

And such to Ronald's pitying eye
 The helpless maid appears,
 He longed to soothe the rising sigh,
 And with a brother's sympathy
 To dry the falling tears.
 He brooded o'er the tender theme,
 Till it became his nightly dream,—
 Unwelcome was the glance of day
 That chased the visioned bliss away.
 The veil—the awful vow—would rise
 Abrupt to his averted eyes,
 But he would chide the start that came,
 And say 'twas friendship's holiest flame;
 Then seek the stern repelling grate,
 Maria's pensive step to wait,
 And draw, with gentle art refined,
 The pure thoughts from her spotless mind.

Her word, her look, her very tone
 Seemed but the echo of his own,
 For the same master spring controls
 Each impulse of their kindred souls.
 And when he hears the tolling hour,
 That bids his lingering step depart,
 He goes, in solitude to pour
 The treacherous balsam on his heart,
 And shrinks from friendship's solace, given
 To woe-worn man by bounteous Heaven.

V.

Fitz-Arthur marked th' unwonted cloud,
 That spoke an inward storm,
 And wrapped in uncongenial shroud
 That spirit once so warm:
 He saw the mantling glow arise,
 The sparkling rapture in his eyes,
 When to the grated iron screen
 The Nun's advancing step was seen.
 He read his heart, and deeply grieved
 To find that gallant heart deceived
 By fancy's idle power;
 And longed to see the spell unbound
 By the inspiring bugle-sound,
 In battle's rousing hour.
 With distant hint, and cautious speech,
 He strove the bosom's wound to reach;
 But welcome cold could Ronald's mind
 For truth's unflattering lesson find,
 For conscience said, an earthly flame
 Was masked by friendship's specious name.
 He dreaded lest Fitz-Arthur's eye
 The cherished phantom might espy,
 And scare, with reason's deep-toned knell,
 The forms of fancy's dreaming spell.
 So inconsistent still is love!
 He writhes beneath a piercing smart,
 Yet shuns the hand that would remove
 With pious care the rankling dart.

VI.

Unscathed by love's insidious power,
 Fitz-Arthur passed the cheerful hour,
 And in the sportive argument,
 Would oft the heedless sally vent,
 That won the ready smile,
 Or the soft voice and plaintive lute,
 Would vie with his harmonious flute,
 The moments to beguile.

VII.

A noble maid from royal Spain,
 Had lately graced St. Clara's fane,
 And none the lofty note could swell,
 Like the Castilian Isabel.
 Her kinsmen's arms were famed afar
 In the fierce desultory war,
 That proved to the invaders' might
 More wasting than the practiced fight.

High on their native mountain's breast,
 Their dwellings, like the eagle's nest,
 Brave the bewildered foe,—
 And like the lightning's flash they came,
 To dart destruction's sudden flame,
 On the dark host below;
 Then parting in the deserts nigh,
 Their various paths they hold,
 And singly the pursuit defy,
 Intangible as hold.

VIII.

The triumphs of her kindred race
 Beamed o'er the nun's majestic face;
 The theme her nut-brown cheek has dyed
 In the rich glow of patriotic pride,
 While from her loved guitar she draws
 In tasteful skill the tone,
 And sings the wild Guerrilla wars,
 With spirit all her own.

IX.

ISABEL'S SONG.

THE GUERRILLA.

Is it the voice of the midnight breeze
 That comes by fits through the gloomy trees?
 Was it the light of the mountain stream
 That flashed but now to the pale moon-beam?
 And can the dash of that slender wave
 Echo so loud from the rocky cave?—

—Those sounds are the prelude to deadly fray
 Poinard and pistol reflect the ray;
 That echo tells where the fiery steel
 Impatiently stamps, and would fain be freed,
 While the shadows of that lone cave conceal
 The bravest and best of proud Castile.

Stern Juan throws back his ebon locks—
 "They have bade us cower in our native rocks!
 We cower but to rise, like the feathered king,
 To a loftier flight on a bolder wing:
 Their dearest blood shall our talons stain,
 When we scream in their ears, "Revenge for
 Spain!"

Sad swelled the sigh in Alonzo's breast,
 And mournfully drooped his plumed crest:
 "Too well they have guarded the conquered
 walls,
 And revel secure in our ancient halls;
 My brother's daughter and youthful heir
 Are held in unwilling hostage there."—

"Mine be the task"—cried the dark-eyed
 chief—
 "Our deeds must be sudden, our words be brief;
 Hold ambush close in the rocky dell,
 And look to hear more by the vesper bell:

I trust to my Saint, and my well-tried sword,
And the pass of the undiscovered ford."—

—"Yet think on the fearful odds, and pause."—

—"I think on our wrongs, and our Country's
cause!

Ere the children shall mourn in captivity,
I will set my life on a desperate die,
My name and my purpose at once reveal,
And trust to the honour of high Castile."—

He has mounted his steed, and the shades of
night

Have closed his path on his comrade's sight;
The moon is withdrawing her feeble ray,
And the chiefs are gone on their silent way,
And hope to deal on the battle plain,
To Gallia woe, and revenge for Spain.—

X.

SONG CONTINUED.

The guns are silenced—the broken swords
Are wrenched from the hands of their lifeless
lords,

And the batteries screen, with gloomy frown,
The gates of the newly vanquished town.
While her lofty towers are echoing high,
To the notes of unhallowed revelry.

Three sides are guarded, but safe they deem
The fourth that is laved by the spreading
stream;—

They knew not the ford, whose winding way
Brave Juan has traced ere the dawn of day,
Nor dreamed that by those neglected guns
Lurked the boldest of Spain's unconquered sons.

He lay till about the vesper hour,
When the children are led from their prison
tower,

That the breeze may play, for a niggardly space,
To wave the light curl from the guileless face,
And kiss off the bitter tear that flows
Down cheeks where terror has blanched the
rose.

One ruffian an ample guard is found,
To lead the babes on their lonely round,
Well trained to the gaoler's ruthless part—
But Juan's poignard is in his heart!—
He hath lifted the maid like a willow wand,
And the gallant boy has grasped his hand.

"Brave Spaniard, haste! let us quickly flee,
To the verge of earth I will follow thee!"
They plunge at once in the conscious tide,
And safely they reach the farther side,—
Unmarked they steal o'er the woody space,
And rush to their Uncle's fond embrace.—

—"The doves are freed—and the ravenous kite
To-morrow shall soar on his latest flight:
Too cheap the conquest—too poor the strife,
That cost but one wretch's worthless life.
Secure the children—the dawning sky
Shall light us to vengeance and victory!"

XI.

SONG CONTINUED.

Ere night had parted, brave Juan stood
On the outer verge of the friendly wood;—
He rests his sword on the olive bough,
And places his trusty steed below,
While the shroud of a peasant's poor disguise,
Veils his noble form from enquiring eyes.

He seeks the walls, where rising loud,
Mix the angry tones of the armed crowd;
And hears of the children's mystic flight,
And the fiery threat of lawless might,
That dooms the city to flame and sword,
If evening see not the prize restored.

In uncouth phrase he tells his tale,
Of a horseman who passed o'er the lonely vale,
And close by his courser's side there speed
Two slender forms on a lighter steed,
And well he deems that the rugged height
Perforce must have checked their eager flight.

"To arms! and haste to the mountain's side;
This peasant slave shall our footsteps guide:
Thou wretch! remember thy caitiff head
Shall vouch for the tale thy lips have said!"
—How blithely the bold Castilian strode,
As he led them forth on their fatal road!—

He has drawn to the wood the unwary bands,
He springs to the spot where his charger stands,
He vaults, and is fixed on the gallant steed,
His blade from its verdant sheath is freed,
He has given the spur, and loosened the rein
And shouted aloud, "St. James for Spain!"

Bravely they fought, and struggled long,
For rage is bold and despair is strong,—
But rage and despair in vain engage
With vengeful hatred and tenfold rage;
The chargers of Spain their fetlocks dyed
In the last opposer's vital tide.

The Gaul has collected a mighty force,—
But the heroes are gone on their trackless
course;
They part like the streams of the Northern light,
Yet oft shall those scattered flames unite,
And teach the astonished foe to feel
The death-dealing vengeance of wronged Cas-
tile.

XII.

The cadence of the closing note
Still on th' enchanted ear would float,
While in the maid's uplifted eye
Blazed Juan's soul of pride,
And scorn and indignation high
Her beauteous lips divide,
And her resounding tones inspire
With gleams of a prophetic fire.

XIII.

Thus hour by hour, and day by day,
Still glided unperceived away.
Bernardo all their steps attends,
And with his pleasing converse blends
The pious and instructive truth,
So needful to unthinking youth ;
The good old man would fain delay
The call that soon must end their stay.
—O could he hear the sighs that swell
In fair Maria's lonely cell,
And view the ineffectual strife,
That preys upon her harmless life.
His trembling hand the gates would close
On the sad partner of her woe.

CANTO V.

I.

How lightly on the quiet breast
Close the unruffled wings of sleep !
Bathing the peaceful brow in rest
Soft as the dew that violets weep,—
While with her poppy garland blending
The airy forms of worlds unknown,
She leads the willing soul, ascending
Through flowery paths to Fancy's throne,
And decks the Ethiop form of night
In halcyon plumes of azure light.—

II.

Sleep has a Sister, dark and dread,
Who seeks the mourner's tear-stained bed ;
With sullen scowl, and raven plume,
She deepens midnight's cheerless gloom,
And strews the throbbing temple o'er
With bitter rue and hellebore,—
And loves the shrinking soul to bear
Through wilds of terror and despair ;
Snatching from reason's hand the rein,
She whirls the giddy wretch afar,
Where phantoms, horrible as vain,
Throng round the witch's ebon car,
Till, panting from the fearful fight,
The sufferer wakes to grief and light.

III.

No more the balm of tranquil rest
Is shed o'er sad Maria's breast,
No more the shrine and midnight prayer
Her undivided homage share ;
One visioned form will hover near,
One voice still vibrate on her ear,—
And when within her narrow cell,
Her hand th' accustomed bead would tell,
Still from her murmuring lips will steal,
The ceaseless prayer for Ronald's weal.
What though her pious mind disowned
The interdicted name of Love,
Th' usurper in her heart was throned,
Nor virtue's self that throne might move ;
While she, a lone unsheltered flower,
Was withering underneath his power,
And that fair cheek was faint and pale,
As the meek snow-drop in the vale.
With pitying eye, Fitz-Arthur viewed
The maid by hopeless love subdued,
And inly vowed by strong reproof
His lingering friend to tear,
Far from that dark ill-fated roof
Of passion and despair.

IV.

The morning beam was scarce displayed
On the wild mountain, when he sought
To pass, within the fragrant shade,
An hour of deep and serious thought ;
But in the glen, in mental dream,
He found his pensive friend reclined,
Intent upon the murmuring stream
That soothed to rest his feverish mind.
Roused by the loud advancing tread,
He slowly raised his languid head,—
“ Fitz-Arthur ! you are soon abroad,
To greet the morning's early light.”—
“ Yes, I have viewed my idle sword,
And burnished it for future fight ;
For truly we shall both be shamed
To hear our conquering hero named,
If loitering here in sloth and ease,
We let the rust our weapons seize :
What think you, if tomorrow's ray
Behold us on our destined way ?”—
His half-averted glances seek
The varying hue of Ronald's cheek.
—“ I would not, for an empire's power
Be absent from the battle hour ;—
Yet do the troops with toil o'erspent,
Repose beneath the sheltering tent,
And—doubt not but Bernardo's care
Will for our timely march prepare—
Till then”—his martial spirit strove
Disdainful 'gainst the tyrant Love.
Fitz-Arthur saw the mounting blush,
And marked the downcast eyes,

He felt resentment's kindling flush
 Each calmer thought surprise,
 Nor longer his impetuous soul
 Could the severe reproach control.
 With curling lip, and scornful look,
 He glanced from Ronald to the brook :—
 " Let the sweet purling stream o'erwhelm
 Thy warlike garb and useless helm,
 Methinks a cowl would better grace
 The outline of that pensive face ;
 Forsake thy King—eschew thy creed,
 Embrace the crucifix and bead,
 Doff that neglected steal !
 Let Britain bleed, and Lusitania fall,
 Friar Ronald in his Convent wall
 No sense of shame will feel.

V.

" Far better had I seen thee die
 In yonder midnight glen !
 Soldiers had caught thy latest sigh,
 And in an honoured grave thoud'st lie,
 Mourned by thy countrymen.—
 —I care not for that reddening frown !—
 I saved thee not, thy bright renown
 At woman's feet to lay,
 To languish for an idle toy,
 And like a whimpering love-sick boy,
 Sigh thy fond soul away !—
 A Nun professed !" he sternly smiled,
 " Why Ronald, surr the wayward child,
 Who in the stream shall see
 The moon's reflection round and fair,
 And cries to catch the bauble rare,
 Is but the type of thee :
 Boldly the urchin might essay,
 To grasp the warm resplendent ray,
 Cold recompense were his,
 And such were thine, if thou should'st try
 To seize her heart which dwells on high,
 Among the saints in bliss."—

VI.

Resentment flashed in Ronald's eyes—
 " To me these daring words addressed !
 But that my soul may well despise,
 Boy as thou art, thy taunting jest,
 This sword thy hasty tongue should teach,
 To weigh the yet unuttered speech :—
 Deem'st thou I bear a heart so base,
 To shame my Country's warlike race ?—
 As for the life thou braggest to save
 I value not the gift from thee ;
 Take what thy well-meant succour gave,
 But check that tongue so bold and free,
 And cast no more thy gibes on me !"

VII.

Sternly he spoke, and strode away :—
 Rage struggled in Fitz-Arthur's breast,

But fond affection barred its way,
 And bade the angry impulse rest.
 His noble spirit spurned at fear,
 But Ronald to his soul was dear :—
 Then he had probed the treacherous wound
 Beyond the victim's strength,
 And grieved that prudence could not bound
 His words' unguarded length :
 Wiser he deemed it to retire,
 Again ere Ronald came,
 He feared his own indignant ire
 Might burst in deadly flame ;
 And thought what woe 'twere his to feel,
 Destroying where he meant to heal.

VIII.

But ere he well might turn to go,
 Ronald, with temperate step and slow,
 Returning met his eye ;
 Erect he stood in martial grace,
 And firmly kept his former place,
 He would not seem to fly.—
 Their glances meet, as summer beams,
 Dart forth their bright and transient gleams
 Through the unobtrusive cloud ;
 And struggle to resume the day,
 With that accustomed vivid ray,
 The envious gloom would shroud :
 Well versed each other's looks to read,
 Small aid from words those glances need.

IX.

Ronald spoke first, and mildly said,
 " Fitz-Arthur, I was wrong,
 Thy zealous friendship to upbraid
 In terms so sharp and strong,
 Albeit thy words were harsh and rude,
 And taxed me with ingratitude,
 And—what my soul abhors !
 My patriot warmth no longer glowed,
 Although my dearest blood has flowed
 In my loved Country's cause.
 Nay more,—thou said'st"—his colour rose,
 And to the ground his glance he throws,
 " That I, with treacherous art,
 For my own selfish views would dye
 With the foul stain of perjury,
 Yon Maid's unspotted heart,
 And from her woe-worn soul remove
 A heavenly for an earthly love.
 Could such black charge stand unrepelled ?"—
 His heart with strong emotion swelled.
 " Friend of my soul ! forgive the wrong,
 My zeal hath blazed too rudely strong,
 Roughly I seized the fatal dart,
 That festers in thy gallant heart ;
 And my unskilful hand hath pressed
 The shaft more deeply in thy breast."—

X.

That evening to Fitz-Arthur's hand,
A courier brought the chief's command,
That he upon the tented plain,
Should join his warlike friends again ;
But as no march they meditate,
Ronald, within the Convent gate,
May yet the future summons wait.

XI.

The morning's earliest beam surveyed
Fitz-Arthur for the march arrayed,
His face in wonted smiles was dressed,
But Ronald's fate disturbed his breast.
And when the pious Nuns had given
Their matin orisons to Heaven,
Pressed round the grate in tears they stand,
Contending for the out-stretched hand,
That soon in bloody battle field,
Again the glittering blade must wield.—
The Abbess with an ardent prayer
Commends him to th' Almighty's care,—

In gentle accents then,
While her kind cheek with dew is wet,
She prays him never to forget

The Convent in the glen.
Laden with blessings, in prayers, and gifts,
And tells them, in the next bold fray
His sword shall their good deeds repay.
His holy hands Bernardo spread,
Above the warrior's bending head,
While scarce his quivering lip can say
The fervent "Benedicite!"

XII.

Ronald the warm injunction gives,
To warn him of the earliest move ;
For if to that good day he lives,
His sword his steadfast faith shall prove.
With gentle hint, and mild disguise,
His friend the wholesome counsel plies ;
And now they reach the outward glen—
—"Soon may we meet as fighting men !
Part we in this eventful dell ;—
Dear Ronald, guard thy heart—farewell !"

XIII.

Throughout St. Clara's holy bounds,
The silence of dejection hung,
The cheerful note no more resounds,
The voice is mute, the lyre unstrung ;
Even Isabel's resplendent eye,
Now rolled in listless vacancy ;
Maria felt the sad farewell,
As presage of a warning knell,
And shuddered, as the deadly chill
Stole o'er her frame with painful thrill.
Bernardo strove, but strove in vain,
To wake the cheerful smile again ;—
The pensive Nuns too keenly viewed
The gloom of hopeless solitude.

XIV.

—O ! let me earth's wide surface tread,
With weary step, unsheltered head,
And let my feeble frame sustain
The stormy terrors of the main ;
An endless pilgrimage to roam,
From native land and peaceful home,
With never-ceasing care to tend
The steps of one beloved friend !
And I will greet, with ready smile,
The forms of peril, want, and toil,
So on my lip may never dwell
That dreary sound—the long Farewell !
That blighter of our every joy,
That canker, formed but to destroy
The rose that sparingly adorns
This cloudy wilderness of thorns.
—Oh, heavily its accents swell !
Even from th' unwilling, short, good night,
To the last deep and hollow knell,
O'er those the grave's relentless cell
Hath closed for ever from her sight !

XV.

While many a vestal sigh is borne
On the soft breezes of the morn,
And prayers to patron Saints are told
For the young warrior true and bold,—
Cheerly he winds his way ;
The cloud upon his spirits light,
Dispersed like lingering shades of night
Before the rising day.
High deeds of might and wreaths of fame
Before his brightening fancy came ;—
Proud Gaul subdued, Iberia freed,
An honoured name, and laurelled meed,
Supplied a long and flattering dream,—
And home, dear home, still crowned the theme.
For there were hearts in Britain's Isle,
That glowed but in his magic smile,
Parents, whose only pride and joy
Was centred in that gallant boy,
And friends, whose anxious breasts would burn
In rapture at his safe return.

XVI.

How throbbed his bosom when afar
He saw the radiant lines of war !
And to the playful breeze unfurled
The glorious flag that awed the world.
While notes of preparation rise,
And he—the hand, the eye, the soul,
Wellesley—the mighty plan supplies,
That moves and regulates the whole.
Fitz-Arthur hears the high design
Is ripening for the fray ;
Cuesta will soon his force combine
With Albion's proud array ;
And high Madrid her head shall rear,
When their united bands appear

XVII.

Ronald has heard the martial call,
That roused him from inglorious thrall,—
Once more his eye is beaming bright
With all the warrior's stern delight ;
Nor treacherous Love himself may claim
Another day's delay,
To-morrow to the field of fame
He speeds his hasty way.
But grief can dim that sparkling eye,
And wring his soul with agony,
And treble all his former woes,
As to his purpose firm and true,
With stealing step, alone he goes,
To take a long, a last adieu !

CANTO VI.

I.

WHERE is the kind considerate art
That veiled the pangs of Ronald's heart ?
Alas ! the fearful parting hour
Has torn the feeble shroud aside,
Nor longer has the sufferer power
His bosom's agony to hide ;
But every sound his lips express
Is love's despairing bitterness.

II.

As vainly would the maid control
The wild emotions of her soul,
Till her distracted glances fell
On the low shrine that graced the cell,—
Then on the cross her hand she laid,
"The will of God must be obeyed !
In earliest years this form was given,
To be th' affianced bride of Heaven,—
And what avails it now to say,
That had I drawn the vital air
Where liberty delights to stray,
In yonder Isle, so sweet and fair,—
Aye, had I filled her regal throne,
Myself, my crown, were thine alone :
Or happier in some cottage bower,
To share with thee the peaceful hour,
To tend our white flocks on the plain,
To watch the autumn's ripening grain,
Around our little porch to twine
The roses and the eglantine,
To bid our simple garden bloom,
And wander in the solemn shade,
Where through the oak tree's pleasing gloom
The zephyr with the moon-beam played ;
The nightingale with vesper song
Had closed in peaceful rest our eyes,
And the lark's matin clear and strong,

Pierced the thatched roof, and bade us rise :
Adown life's current, side by side,
Methinks our barks would smoothly glide."—
—The faltering voice her heart betrayed,
She grasped the cross, and firmer said
"The will of God must be obeyed !—
And when 'gainst His o'erruling power
Our wayward wills would seek to rise,
That is the best, the holiest hour
For most accepted sacrifice ;
'Tis then we emulate the Son—
—Oh Father ! may thy will be done !
Since thou hast deemed me meet to share
The vestal's joys, the life of prayer,
Shall my ungrateful heart rebel,
Impatient of the sheltering ood ?
No—ever at thy sacred shrine
O ! let me yield my will to thine !"
Her hands are clasped, and raised her eye,
In patient, meek humility,—
But the faint hectic on her cheek,
Her pale and quivering lip, bespeak
What deep and strong emotions pressed
For empire in her lab'ring breast,
While closer still her fevered grasp
The crucifix essayed to clasp,
As if within its holy power
Dwelt the sole balm for that sad hour.

III.

Again she bends her pitying glance
On him who lost in sullen trance,
Was brooding o'er their hopeless fate ;
One hand upon his brow was spread,
As if to calm his throbbing head,
The other grasped the fatal grate.
A low and scarcely uttered groan
Forced passage for his stifled breath,
Then starting, and in hollow tone,
"Maria ! wilt thou work my death ?
Break these accursed bands, and fly
The hated den of bigotry !
Mistaken maid ! would righteous Heaven
That soul of sympathy have given
To moulder in a living tomb,
Unblessed by one congenial heart,
To shut thee from creation's bloom ?
—'Twas superstition's baneful art !—
Burst the dark chain and fly with me
To pure and pious liberty ;
And every joy that Isle can give
Shall smile upon thy spotless life,
Too blest for thee alone to live,
My treasured love, my cherished wife !"—

IV.

With altered look, and brow severe,
—"Ronald," she said, "I may not bear
Our holy faith revised ;

Nor in St. Clara's blessed fane,
 Must thy rash lips essay to stain
 The virtue of her child.
 The awful vow is registered,
 In the bright record kept on high,
 And my insulted ear has heard
 The proffered boon of perjury!"
 Abashed before her eyes' keen rays,
 To earth was sunk his ardent gaze,
 Then raised to heaven in frantic rage,—
 "My death shall soon thy wrath assuage!
 Yes, one more onset with the foe
 That sought thy Country's overthrow,
 And this detested head laid low,
 Shall find a bloody grave,
 And thou may'st one kind tear bestow
 On him thou would'st not save!"

V.

—"I would not save! Oh witness Heaven,
 One boon to my entreaty given
 Should shield thee in the deadly strife,
 Thy ransom, poor Maria's life."—
 The starting tear, the bursting sob,
 Bespoke her bosom's anguished throb,
 While love, despair, and virtuous shame,
 In following tides of crimson came
 O'er his flushed brow and burning frame.
 "Forgive the harsh unjust reproof,—
 I will not tear thee from the roof
 Thy pious zeal has sanctified,
 Nor bid thee cast the veil aside;—
 On thee be Heaven's best blessings shown,
 The guilt, the punishment my own!—
 Short is our life's uncertain scene,
 Pass the few years that intervene,
 And freed at length, each kindred soul
 Shall seek the same celestial goal."

VI.

—"Now blessed be the Power who brought
 To soothe thy mind, that holy thought!
 To happier scenes, through purer skies,
 May our glad souls together rise!"—
 She took the kerchief from her head,
 "Be this the simple pledge" she said,
 "Of friendship calm and bright;
 Bear it to yonder battle-plain,
 And never may the blood-drop stain
 Its now untarnished white!"—
 She gave it to his eager grasp,
 She met his hand's impassioned clasp,
 And bowed her lovely head;
 Then drawing from his earnest hold,
 Her gentle hands once more to fold
 Her crucifix she spread,
 And called on every Saint to bless
 Her friend with glory and success.
 "Oh! free from sorrow, pain, and care,
 May'st thou behold thy native shore!

To Heaven shall rise that daily prayer—
 Farewell!—on earth we meet no more!"

VII.

—The sun is in the western sky,
 And Love his frantic slave hath led
 To yonder steep so wildly high,
 Where man had never dared to tread.
 What seeks he there? it is the hour,
 When in her favorite moss-clad bower,
 Maria never fails to raise
 Her hand in prayer, her voice in praise:
 So told the Friar—and Ronald now,
 Goaded by love had reached the brow,
 Whose height a barrier safe was found,
 To screen the garden's northern bound.
 His downward gaze at length he bends,
 And, careless of his life, descends;—
 He cannot stay his rapid course,
 'Tis like the mountain cataract's force,—
 Yet firmly still he trod, and now,
 His hand has grasped a friendly bough;
 There rests he for a time to breathe,
 O'er the diminished space beneath,
 When gliding through the distant trees,
 Maria's graceful form he sees.
 And now a daring leap has thrown
 His weight on a projecting stone;
 Descending now, where closer grew
 The cork tree and the spreading yew,
 A welcome aid they lent,
 And lightly, as from spray to spray
 The sportive squirrel speeds his way,
 His verdant course he bent.
 And now his eye the distance traced,
 Then glanced with piercing search around,
 One moment and his step is placed
 Within the garden's hallowed bound!

VIII.

He trembles,—yes the heart that stood
 Unmoved in battle's crimson flood,
 Shrinks from the daring deed, which shame
 Tells him is sacrilegious blame.
 He will not heed the warning voice,
 He plunges in the myrtle shade,
 To lose it in the murmuring noise
 That issues from the bright cascade.
 A thousand roses gay entwine,
 Around the orange and the vine.—
 The heliotrope, so soft and fair,
 Sheds its sweet perfume on the air,
 And all around, above, below,
 A fairy vision seems to glow;
 He heeds it not—his steps are bent,
 To the rude grotto's cell,
 'Twas to that spot Maria went,
 —Perchance her beads to tell—
 Perchance to think on one too near,
 Less holy, but alas! more dear.—

IX.

Soon has he reached the modest bower,
 And he has seen that drooping flower,
 Purer and sweeter than the rose
 That all around its fragrance throws.
 Low at the sacred shrine she kneels,
 While fast the trembling tear-drop steals;
 Her bosom heaves in agony,
 And mingled with the frequent sigh,
 From her wan lips low murmured came
 A blessing, prayer, and—Ronald's name.
 What varying thrills of pain and bliss
 Rent his wild-throbbing heart at this!
 Yet holy awe withheld his hand,
 Half reaching to the gate,
 He seems upon the verge to stand
 Of everlasting fate:
 But fast those living crystals roll
 O'er her pale cheek, and melt his soul,
 While treacherous Love impels him on,
 Till every calmer thought is gone;
 Unheard is Reason's voice divine,
 And desperate to the holy shrine
 His daring steps proceed,—
 What power that frantic purpose quelled?
 Bernardo's sacred arm withheld
 And warned him from the deed.

X.

Astonishment, confusion, shame,
 In one o'erwhelming current came;—
 The Father saw the moment's power,
 And drew him to the olive bower,
 And on his trembling lip he laid
 A supplicating hand;
 While Ronald's awe-struck mind obeyed
 The mild and soft command,
 Maria slowly rose, and spread
 The veil around her drooping head;
 Her arms were folded on her breast,
 And her meek bending form expressed
 Returning calmness in a mind
 Forlorn, forsaken, but resigned;—
 And Ronald strove not to unclasp
 Bernardo's weak but earnest grasp;—
 Passive he stood, while glided by
 The sad unconscious fair,
 Then on the Father bent his eye,
 In sullen, calm despair:
 "I know my crime, I know its doom,
 Thrice welcome is the closing tomb!"
 "Yes, even the closing tomb, my son,
 Must welcome prove to thee,
 Favoured by Heaven, thy virtue won
 A glorious victory!"
 A tear from his mild eye that stole
 Spoke soothing peace to Ronald's soul.
 "Much have I erred," Bernardo said,
 As through the screening orange shade
 Slowly they bent their way,—

"For I exposed two gentle hearts,
 Unthinkingly to sorrow's darts,
 And Satan's deadly sway:
 Much have I erred—but Heaven forgave,
 And sent me to prevent and save.—"

XI.

"But say, by what strange chance you found
 An inlet to this guarded ground?"
 He followed Ronald's glancing eye,
 And started, as the mountain high
 Met his astonished sight;
 "The Virgin and the Saints defend!
 And did you then, my son, descend
 From that tremendous height!
 What was the purposed deed?—what cause?"—
 He waited with an anxious pause:
 "I came for one last parting glance,—
 I saw Maria's step advance
 To yonder grot—by passion wild
 Each sober faculty beguiled,
 I followed—heard the prayer addressed
 To Heaven for me—you know the rest."—

XII.

His wondering eye the Father raised,
 Then silently his Maker praised;
 And stooped him to the ground, where lay
 A rose just severed from the spray;
 "My son, behold this lovely flower,
 It bloomed in a secluded bower;
 Some idle hands misjudging tore
 The floweret from its stem,
 Its beauteous tints revive no more,
 It cannot profit them!

XIII.

"Who from yon peaceful fane would tear
 One maiden bud that blossoms there,
 Screened from the tempest's rudely hurled
 O'er that defenceless waste—the world?
 It was the hand of Heaven that spread
 The holy shelter o'er their head,
 And saved them from the storms of life,
 The clouds of woe, the waves of strife,
 The thousand agonies that press
 On woman's blighted tenderness,
 When by that poisoned shaft subdued,
 Their sex too often prove,
 The arrow of ingratitude,
 Barbed by the hand of love!
 The faithful bosom left to bear
 The deep sad pressure of despair;
 The day of pain, the night of sorrow,
 The joyless dawning of the morrow,
 The sickening eye, that cannot trace
 One comfort in creation's space,
 Until the pitying tomb shall close
 On the poor mourner's silent woe.—"

Now haste thee to the field and bear
 Even to thy grave this blighted flower,—
 The tale its faded leaves declare,
 Shall comfort thy departing hour !”

CANTO VII.

I.

ALBERCHE ! on thy winding stream
 The eye of morn was wont to beam,
 And make each opening flower display
 Its velvet petals in the ray,—
 To drink the pearl of glistening dew,
 And wake the songster's note anew ;
 Then the dark prowlers of the night
 Sped from the searching glance of light,
 Which bade Heaven's feebler lamps retire
 Before the blaze of vital fire,—
 While cheerily the shepherd trod,
 O'er Talavera's verdant sod.

II.

But faintly pale the day-light broke,
 Dim struggling through the earthly smoke
 That wrapped those altered plains in shroud
 Denser than midnight's murkiest cloud,—
 Nor morning's beam might chase away
 The wolves of carnage from their prey.
 There, for the mild star's twinkling rays,
 Still flashed the death-devoting blaze ;
 There, for the feathered warbler's note,
 The trumpet strained its brazen throat ;
 Crushed were the wild flowers of the plain
 Beneath the wounded and the slain,—
 The dew profusely sprinkled o'er,
 Was of those warriors' gushing gore.

III.

Sternly the British phalanx stood,
 And deep defiance frowned,
 While rolled the Gaul his hostile flood
 In ceaseless tide around.
 The soothing hour of rest had given
 No respite from the fight,
 The death-fire's column rose to heaven,
 As horrible as bright !
 And on, by that red blaze, were driven,
 The hosts whose battle-peal had riven
 The curtain of the night.

IV.

Forbear my feeble muse ! nor fling
 A hand unpractised o'er the string
 That echoed to the lay,

Where rose in richest minstrelsy,
 The combat fierce, the conquest high,
 Of Talavera's day :
 O quit the mighty theme, and glance
 Where yonder slender band advance
 Impetuous o'er the plain,
 And press upon the wily foe
 Who meditates the sure o'erthrow
 Of that devoted train.
 There, in the jaws of death and flame,
 Fitz-Arthur seeks the smile of Fame,
 And cheers each eager friend,
 While from the central battle's roar,
 Through clouds of smoke and seas of gore,
 Their crimson path they bend :
 Too late they view the vengeful foes,
 In awful force surrounding close ;
 Well may each warrior deem he stands
 On his allotted grave,
 Though with redoubled force their hands
 The dinted faulchions wave,
 And every death-shot parting true,
 Straight to some Gallic bosom flew.
 Still rushing with o'erwhelming might,
 The raging foemen urge the fight ;
 Cleft is Fitz-Arthur's waving crest,
 The blood is streaming o'er his vest,
 But like the mountain pine, his form
 Rises majestic through the storm :
 Turn, gallant youth, thy fearless eye,
 For Ronald's sword is flaming nigh ;
 Through their firm ranks and close array
 With onset fierce he rends his way,
 Before their startled view appears
 The glittering blade, the range of spears,
 And Ronald, like the simoon's breath,
 Resistless pours the blast of death.

V.

Beneath the evening's sober ray,
 The echoing war-note dies away.
 The skilful Leech has gently bound
 The cincture on Fitz-Arthur's wound,
 Who scorns his wearied eye to close,
 Beneath the wing of soft repose,
 Till Ronald shall have pledged the draught,
 To Britain and to conquest quaffed.
 Amid th' exulting victor train
 He seeks him, but alas ! in vain :—
 The posted guard the wounded band,
 No cheering hope can yield,
 Too well they fear that gallant hand
 Is cold upon the field !
 And now his earnest accents ask
 To share in their accustomed task,
 Who haste, with sad and silent tread,
 To part the dying from the dead.

VI.

O veil, my muse, thy weeping eye !
 Nor pause on the soul-sickening plain,

Where murderous carnage triumphs high,
 O'er the red piles of warriors slain :
 View not the frozen gaze of death,
 That glares as in unearthly strife,
 Nor mark the agonizing breath
 That struggles still for life,—
 But, while the drop of anguish rolls,
 Beg Heaven's sweet mercy on their souls !

VII.

As Phœbus o'er the western hill
 Slowly recedes, and lingers still,
 So Ronald's spirit paused, as yet
 His sun of glory was not set :—
 Drawn from the dank, corrupting steam,
 And laved with the refreshing stream,
 Once more his eyes unclosed ;
 Once more upon his altered cheek,
 A wandering and uncertain streak
 Of vital colour rose,—
 And Hope's unfaithful meteor broke
 On glad Fitz-Arthur when he spoke.
 " Or foes or friends,—in pity say
 How fares the fight ?—how goes the day ?"—
 —" Yonder across Alberche's stream,
 Slowly retires the routed Gaul ;
 The watch-fires ray and Cynthia's beam
 On Albion's conquering banner fall !"
 —" Fitz-Arthur to my dying ear
 How sweetly sounds thy cheering voice !
 O truest friend ! thou sought'st me here,
 To bid my parting soul rejoice !"
 " Talk not of parting—many a sun—"
 —" It may not be—my sand is run :
 The richest boon that Heaven could yield,
 Is death on this victorious field !
 My breath is short—my wounded breast—
 —Fitz-Arthur, hear my last request !
 Whene'er this contest's glorious close
 Shall proffer thee a long repose,
 Hasten to the glen,"—his keen eye shone—
 " Maria !—Say her soldier fell,
 Where many a fierce invader's groan
 Pealed forth her murdered father's knell.
 Her parting boon my hand shall grasp,
 Till death have loosed its lingering clasp :
 Then, faithful friend ! thy pious care
 To her the treasured gift will bear."—

VIII.

A pang that rent his mangled breast
 His faltering voice awhile suppressed ;
 His brow was damp with dew of death,
 And shorter came the panting breath,—
 But still in calm serenity
 On heaven was fixed his fading eye.
 With gentle arm Fitz-Arthur raised
 His drooping head, and hopeless gazed,
 Bending, with indrawn breath, to seize
 The murmuring accents that expire

Faintly, as to the evening breeze
 Responsive sighs th' Æolian lyre.
 Once more those speaking glances roll,
 And beat, with tranquil beam his own,
 While from the warrior's rising soul
 Breathes the proud thought in loftier tone—
 " Dear comrade ! thou wilt see me laid
 Beneath some olive's friendly shade ;
 And in my father's ancient hall
 Tell thou the tidings of my fall,—
 Tell him unstained by fear or shame,
 My grave is on the field of Fame !"

IX.

Ere sunk the moon, the turf was spread
 By martial hands o'er Ronald's head,
 Where on the slope spontaneous grew
 The olive and sepulchral yew ;
 A little mountain stream supplied
 The never-ceasing dirge beside,
 And lowly flowerets bloomed around,
 To deck the consecrated ground
 Hallowed by friendship's holy tear,
 And the poor soldier's sigh sincere.
 Fitz-Arthur breathed, with bending head,
 A solemn prayer above the dead !
 Then with the dews of midnight damp,
 Sadly he sought the conqueror's camp.

X.

Proud is the hour when heroes meet
 Unscathed from battle's fiery heat,
 While the bright blaze of victory rests
 Resplendent on their lofty crests :
 Yet must the warrior's bosom know,
 In that proud hour such piercing woe
 As well may prompt the saddening thought
 That conquest's wreath is dearly bought ;
 For, borne upon the breeze of death,
 Starting he hears the distant groan,
 And deems some dear-loved comrade's breath
 Has parted in that plaintive tone.
 The eye that like the morning's ray
 Shone cloudless on the early fight,
 Untimely closed, ere fading day,
 In deep and everlasting night :
 Ghastly and cold the blooming face
 Where beamed the heart's untutored smile,
 The towering form of manly grace
 Crushed in the undistinguished pile ;
 And the gay voice, whose carol rose
 Mid yester-eve's convivial train,
 Greeting the march's welcome close,
 Shall never sound again !
 Yes, friendship's tear, compassion's sigh,
 Will cloud the brightest victory,
 While the thinned ranks too well unfold
 How many a gallant heart is cold ;
 How many a soul hath passed the bounds
 That dark eternity surrounds,

And mingled with her awful stream,
Like frost-work in the noontide beam—

XI.

The relics of the brave remain
To moulder in the soil of Spain ;
The mild autumnal breeze had spread
With her pale scattered leaves their bed ;
Iberia's short-lived winter threw
The transient veil of spotless hue ;
And Spring had bade her wild-flowers wave
Luxuriant o'er the soldier's grave,
Ere parting from the warlike train,
Fitz-Arthur sought St. Clara's fane.

XII.

His pensive way was long and lone ;—
The evening fell serenely mild,
And Cynthia from her azure throne,
August in tranquil beauty smiled ;
But sad and cheerless fell the rays,
Unwelcome to his altered gaze ;
He thought of where those moon-beams strayed
O'er his loved Ronald's lowly bed ;
The breeze that whispered from the shade,
The rill that murmured through the glade,
All spoke of the lamented dead.

XIII.

With heavy heart, and dewy eye,
Slowly he paced the well-known dell,
Till sounding from the turret nigh,
He hears once more the hallowed bell.
It comes not with that cheerful chime,
That rose so sweet in other days,
To mark the lapsing course of time,
Or call the Nuns to prayer and praise.
Oh no ! it is the awful toll
That tells of a departed soul !
With quickened step he seeks the gates
That ope to his remembered call,
His boding heart no question waits,—
He presses to the Convent hall.
Silent and dark is all around,
But streams of radiance paint the ground,
Where the long corridor extends ;
And there his stealing step he bends.

XIV.

Sudden a pealing note arose,
With lofty swell and solemn close ;

A holy anthem, deep and clear,
Now strikes on his attentive ear ;—
Behind a column's friendly height,
He screens him from the glare of light,
And views with sad prophetic eye,
The long procession winding nigh.
Bernardo leads the drooping train
With faltering step and motion slow,
His hands the sacred cross sustain,
His placid cheek is blanched by woe.
Along the pillared aisle they spread
And now they bend their measured tread
So near Fitz-Arthur's shaded stand,
That every feature of the band
His eye might trace distinct and clear ;
But all unmarked they came and went,
His keen enquiring gaze was bent
On nought but the approaching bier.

XV.

Bright fell the taper's funeral ray,
Where robed in vestal garb she lay !
Through the light texture of the veil
Shone that fair face so sweetly pale,—
Save the dark lash and graceful brow,
No shade obscured its virgin snow,
She looked as if a peaceful rest
Had sealed her beaming eyes awhile,
And still her half-closed lips expressed
Their meek and melancholy smile.
Her hands were joined, as if in prayer,
And their transparent hues declare
That lingering Death with long delay
Had hovered o'er his patient prey.
The sisters' pious care had strewed
The fragrant herb and blooming flower,
And fancy might have deemed she viewed
A lily in a roseate bower.
Fitz-Arthur gazed, till borne along,
The bier was lost amid the throng,
And the full tide of bursting grief
Gave his o'erburthened heart relief,
While in majestic harmony
Maria's requiem rose on high.

Her's was that deep and solemn knell !
That taper's glimmering radiance fell
Where in the dark and silent cove,
She rests from earthly woes,—
And the sad strain that died away,
Was for her soul's repose.

“PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

IN

HEAVENLY PLACES.”

TO THE INTENT THAT NOW UNTO THE PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS IN HEAVENLY PLACES MIGHT BE KNOWN BY THE CHURCH THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD.—
Ephes. iii. 10.

WE WRESTLE NOT AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD, BUT AGAINST PRINCIPALITIES, AGAINST POWERS, AGAINST THE RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD, AGAINST SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES.—Ephes. iii. 10.

HAVING SPOILED PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS, HE MADE A SHOW OF THEM OPENLY, TRIUMPHING OVER THEM.—Colossians ii. 15.

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PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

IN

HEAVENLY PLACES.



PART I. OF EVIL SPIRITS.

SECTION I.

THEIR EXISTENCE AND CHARACTER.

THE eternal power and godhead of the Most High, are, as St. Paul tells us, invisible things, yet clearly seen and to be understood even of the heathen, by those things which he hath made. Rom. i. 20. The order and harmony of creation, the wonderful manner in which all things are upheld, preserved, perpetuated, or reproduced, appeal to the natural reason and conscience of man, bespeaking some mighty, creative, overruling hand, directed by a wisdom and knowledge to which no mortal may attain. And this recognition is all but universal. However false, however distorted, however debased by the most wretched folly, superstition and crime, we find the principle of Deism in some form established throughout the world.

But beyond this, man cannot go; he sees that God is powerful, and if the desperate wickedness of his own heart did not blind it, he must also perceive that God is good; giving us rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness, clothing the earth with refreshing verdure; decking it with myriads of glowing flowers; bestowing on the birds their soft and graceful plumage, bright in lovely dyes, and teaching them to breathe

forth music from their cheerful throats: causing the moon to walk in brightness, the stars to spangle heaven, and peopling even the little brooks that run among the hills with unnumbered forms of beauty that sport in the pure element. So far, man may recognise God, may love, fear, and praise him.

But beyond this we have no means of penetrating; our bodily organs appear to be the sole medium of communication with what exists. What we can see, hear, feel, smell, or taste, is matter of observance, affording evidence on which the mind may rely, and from it we may reason or conjecture to any extent, but can *know* nothing to bring us acquainted with what lies beyond the range of our senses, we need a special revelation from Him who governs all, and this revelation we possess. Between the two covers of a book that a child may grasp, we find all that is needful or profitable for us to know of the nature, attribute, and works of the Almighty, of his power in creation, his love in redemption, his past dealings with the world, and his future purposes respecting it. By the comparatively dim twilight of his works we may feel after, and haply find him, as the all-presiding governor of the world which he has made: in the bright blaze of his word we behold him distinctly; and not only Him, but a race of intermediate beings, different from ourselves in that they are not burdened with flesh, possessed of faculties and powers that give them a vast advantage over us, and deeply interested, busily employed about us, who are naturally wholly regardless, even when not wholly ignorant concerning them.

Of these mysterious beings we know the number is immensely great; and that they are divided into two classes: the "elect angels," "holy angels," who are God's obedient ministers and do his pleasure; and "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," (Jude 6.) who are rebels against God, and implacable enemies to man. These last are marshalled under one superior chief, who directs their operations, and maintains, with their assistance, a kingdom upon earth, directly opposed to the government of Christ the rightful King. To support by every possible means, to extend and to strengthen this usurped dominion, to seduce all whom he can, to terrify others, and to thwart, harass, and distress every child of God while sojourning here, is the object of the adversary. His very name, Satan, expresses it; and the superior power which as a spirit he possesses, becomes effectual in carrying out his most malevolent designs, whenever the omnipotence of God does not interpose to restrain it.

But assertion, on a subject of such tremendous moment to every individual of the human race, will not suffice: we must have proof—such proof as God alone can afford us means of obtaining: and which where it exists he must also enable us to perceive, for the policy of Satan is wholly opposed to the inquiry. There is nothing he dreads so much as our being "not ignorant of his devices," because he knows that where it is revealed to us, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." Eph. vi. 12. In the preceding verse we are told of a sure defence, and exhorted "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil." And despite the express declarations of God's word, despite its reiterated warnings, despite even our own sore personal experience of his craft and subtlety, we are prone to overlook not only such testimony to his continual activity and abundant means of warning against us, but the very fact of his existence, so far as it concerns the daily experience, collectively and individually, of the Church of Christ.

Strange as this may sound, it is undeniable; we cannot marvel that where Satan, "the god of this world, hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," (2 Cor. iv. 4,) he should have taken care also to blind them to his own devices; that he should have stealthily thrown the bandage across their eyes from behind, so that they know not the hand which performed the operation, not even that such operation is performed; but it is wonderful that he can prevail upon Christian people to banish his name, as they generally do, from their daily converse, and Christian pastors to make only, now and then, a slight incidental reference to it in the pulpit; and in these days, too, while in every department of our households, in every street of our cities, in Church and State, in cottage and palace, at home and abroad, he is incessantly manifesting his hateful presence, perplexing, seducing, embroiling, dismaying, uprooting, and disorganizing, till the whole framework of society is loosened, and ready upon the first shock to crumble about us.

It cannot be unseasonable, at any period, far less at this juncture, to draw the attention of Christians to a point which God has seen fit to represent as of the most stirring, vital importance to them. The warning needs to be often sounded, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Peter v. 8. But in treating of a matter so exceedingly solemn and awful, care must be taken not to run into the opposite danger of saying too much. We must "not go beyond the word of the Lord to speak more nor less." Great mischief has been done, and by great men too, by indulging imagination and building unreal fabrics on the solid foundation of the revealed fact. Scripture alone must speak, in declaring the existence, personality, characters, offices, and positive actings of those spiritual creatures, which constantly surround us, beginning with Satan and his angels. May He, who by death destroyed him that had the power of death; He, the seed of the woman, who came to bruise the serpent's head; He, who led

captivity captive, and who will bruise Satan under our feet shortly: may He, even the Lord Jesus Christ, bless this humble attempt, preserving both the writer and the reader from all presumptuous sin!

Before proceeding to examine the truth concerning Satan, we must notice the false impressions current both as to his person and employment. We are taught from the nursery to regard him as a hideous, disgusting, and almost ludicrously contemptible object. A black, mis-shapen, half-human body, with limbs and other appendages belonging to various classes of animals, an excessively frightful, grinning face; and, in short, a preposterous compound of all that is ugly and incongruous, supply the general idea of the "Prince of this world." This fabulous image bears the marks of his own creation, for it is calculated to throw us off our guard by masking his real importance, so that we grow up ashamed of having once been frightened by these pictures of the devil, and count it a mark of matured reason to laugh at the hobgoblin of our childhood. His name, too, is linked with mean and ridiculous associations; it is denounced as a vulgarity, and when plainly uttered in conversation with reference to his works, a smile of levity, if not a grave reproof, usually awaits the offender. A variety of nicknames have been applied to him, the substitution of which, for his scriptural title, is considered as showing greater respect for the auditors, and greater refinement in the speaker; and he has been so identified with the most flippant, most trifling or profane forms of speech, even among polished gentlemen, that one of the hardest tasks the awakened Christian has to encounter is, to disconnect the name of the devil from such associations, and to dissuade others so offending.

As regards his works, a still more dangerous mistake seems to prevail: he is looked on by the professing world in general as little more than a chimerical personage; one who, when our Lord was on earth, proved busy, and troublesome to him, but who is mostly in hell, tormenting such as he has got into his power, and rarely, if ever, interfering with the course of this world. Sometimes the most petty annoyances and vexatious little mistakes

are referred to his mischievous arrangements, but more through momentary petulance than any sober conviction; at other times he is represented as presiding where very extensive injury is done, perhaps directing the campaigns of a Napoleon, or baffling some scheme of universal philanthropy. But to regard him as systematically busying himself in the concerns of individuals, more particularly as influencing, by his artful suggestion, their words and deeds, is looked on as most childishly superstitious. Nay, even among spiritual persons there is a lurking unbelief on this subject, which gives the enemy many an advantage over them. They are loth to believe that when engaged in promoting a good work, Satan is at their right hand resisting them: that, by his whispered suggestions, their humility is often depressed into cowardice, their zeal quickened to rashness, their confidence urged on to presumption, and their prudence chilled with unbelief. In whatsoever quality the Lord has enabled them to excel, that very excellence Satan will weave a snare for their feet; and the snare once laid, he has abundant agencies at work to draw, or drive them into it. Theoretically, perhaps, this is not denied, but point out a living instance of such delusion, and you are presently reprovèd or frowned into silence.

The following direct testimonies from the scriptures to the existence and character of evil spirits, of whom one distinct chief or leader controls a number of subordinate devils, will establish our first point:—

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Rev. xii. 9.

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John viii. 44.

"But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils." Luke xi. 15.

"If Satan be divided against himself,

how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub." v. 18.

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble." James ii. 19.

"He said unto him, come out of the man, thou unclean spirit; and he asked him, what is thy name; and he answered, saying, my name is Legion; for we are many." Mark v. 8, 9.

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. xxv. 41.

"God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell." 2 Peter ii. 4.

These form but a small portion of the inspired declarations which might be adduced under this head, yet they suffice to place the fact beyond a cavil, and our next step is to ascertain the extent of power possessed by Satan; and the habitual employment of the infernal hosts.

SECTION II.

THE POWER AND EMPLOYMENT OF EVIL SPIRITS.

ALWAYS bearing in mind that our discoveries of things unseen must be limited by the plain declarations of God's word, we shall find it very difficult to fix the precise bounds of Satan's power and authority. That he possesses vast influence over man in his fallen state is very plain. Our Lord repeatedly calls him "the prince of this world." "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." John xii. 31. "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." xiv. 30. "The prince of this world is judged." xiv. 11. St. Paul speaks of him as "the god of this world." 2 Cor. iv. 4; and as "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Eph. ii. 2. Considering how deliberately our first parents cast off their allegiance to God at the bidding of Satan, and by so doing, virtually transferred it to him, we may suppose his acquired dominion to be exceedingly great: inasmuch that when earth's rightful Lord first came, in great humility, to make re-

conciliation for that iniquity of his creature, man, Satan, exhibiting all the kingdoms of the world, could utter that fearful boast, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it." Luke iv. 6. His triumphant vaunt indeed was of short duration; for He, whom he dared to tempt, speedily cast him out of his earthly possessions, and stripped him too, of a more terrible prerogative: for the Son of God became partaker of flesh and blood, "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. ii. 14, 15.

But beyond this, there is something that we cannot fathom: Satan is represented to us occasionally in situations far higher than a mere ruler of all the kingdoms of our earth could aspire to. Glimpses of a mysterious freedom of access to heavenly places are now and then afforded us; and though men have undertaken to explain away by a system of types and figures what our enfeebled intellect cannot grasp, still we have the plain declarations of God's work, which it would be our higher wisdom to receive in its obvious meaning; and where we cannot comprehend, to lay our mouths in the dust, and silently adore.

The first of these instances occurs in the history of Job; where it is said, "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, 'From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.'" Job i. 6, 7, and ii. 1, 2. This occurs twice. Again, Zechariah says, "And he showed me, Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Zech. iii. 1, 2. Perfectly consistent with these views is the language of the Apocalypse; in a passage bearing so emphatically on our subject, that it must be given entire. "And

there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels; and prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: *for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God, day and night.* And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea; for the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Rev. xii. 7—12. Whatever, and whenever this casting out may be, it does not appear to have taken place in Paul's time; for in writing to the Ephesians, he says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places." Eph. vi. 12. So reads the margin of our authorized version; and Wiclif, in 1380, translates it, "Agens spiritual thingis of wickednesse in hewinli, thingis." The Geneva version, 1557, has it, "Against spiritual wickednesses which are above;" and the Rhenish, 1582, "Against the spirituals of wickedness in the celestials." In this, as in other instances, a growing dimness of vision on our mysterious and awful subject, has perhaps biased both translators, to put a gloss on what they cannot easily reconcile with their established systems. There is yet another very remarkable passage belonging to this head. In the book of Daniel, we find a heavenly instructor coming to show the prophet what shall befall his people, the Jews, in the latter days, who thus expresses himself: "The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days; but lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me." Dan. x. 13. And again he says, "Now will I return to fight with the

prince of Persia; and when I am gone forth, the prince of Grecia shall come. . . . and there is none that holdeth your me in these things, but Michael your prince." Dan. x. 20, 21. It is not to be supposed that mere mortal kings were thus enabled to resist angels: we can but understand it of a certain authority exercised by these wicked spirits, these principalities, and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, over nations that, in the practice of idolatrous abominations sacrificed unto devils, as the Apostle declares. We build no theory on these extraordinary declarations of the Most High: we merely point them out, and endeavour to show how they harmonize with other parts of the same immutable word.

Micaiah's vision is also observable. When adjured by the king to declare the truth of what the Lord had revealed concerning his projected enterprize, he thus disclosed it:—"I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth and do so." 1 Kings xxii. 19—22. This is repeated with scarcely any verbal variation in 2 Chron. xviii. 18—21. We cannot suppose the prophet of the Lord was at liberty to invent a fiction concerning the inhabitants of heaven; more especially as his warning was exactly fulfilled: neither can we reasonably suppose that a holy angel would volunteer to become a lying spirit, to mislead a sinner to his final ruin. The doom of Ahab had long been fixed: dogs were to lick his blood in the place where the innocent blood of the murdered Naboth had flowed; and his obstinate determination of going up to battle to Ramoth Gilead was the means of its fulfilment. Still he was warned: the conscientious Jehosophat would not be satisfied unless a true prophet of the Lord was inquired of, after the

encouragement given by Ahab's lying flatteries: and the whole device was then laid bare, though the wicked king rejected the merciful intimation, and committing the faithful messenger to prison, rushed open-eyed upon his own destruction.

One more instance of Satanic interference in matters far above our level, may be adduced. The Apostle Jude, when denouncing those who "speak evil of dignities," adds, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, but durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." Jude 9. Some indeed, identify this passage with that already cited from Zechariah, explaining it of the Jewish polity, or Mosaic law; and would therefore object against our advancing it as an additional testimony; but for such identification we can see no warrant. It would rather seem to refer to the fact, that the Lord so hid the actual human body of Moses, that "No man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." Deut. xxxiv. 6.

These occasional glimpses of the invisible world are exceedingly awful: instead of regarding the adversary as a contemptible being, we can scarcely overrate his importance. Possessed of a power that we cannot rightly estimate, and filled with a malignity the most direful and implacable, he is not a solitary individual waging alone the war of rebellion and ruin; he has hosts unnumbered at command, as we have already shown; and doubtless he knows too well the value of order and subordination not to avail himself, as a skillful general, of his whole disposable force. What, then, is his employment, and to what object does he bend these superhuman energies and mighty means? The answer may be found in any part of the Bible—we trace him by his operations, where he is not actually named; and we know that so far as it concerns us, all may be summed up in three words, Hostility to man. He sought to deface the work of creation, in its bright morning prime; and to a sad extent he succeeded: the work of redemption was undertaken, through the tender mercies of God, to repair that deadly breach; and to resist it is the perpetual aim of Satan and his angels. Alike to him is the task to impede a great na-

tional movement towards Christ, and to lure a little child from the way of righteousness. In either case he puts forth his subtle power, and never loses sight of the object. Foreknowledge he does not possess: that is the prerogative of Deity alone; but his calculations must be wonderfully accurate, considering that to the high angelic faculties of his nature, he adds the experience of some six thousand years of intimate concern in the affairs of men: and a perfect acquaintance with all knowledge and all mysteries, attainable by created intelligence. Before him are spread out all the phenomena of nature: the stars in their course, the ocean in its depths, the earth in all her hidden recesses, and all the complicated operations of her vast elemental laboratory, are visible to him. Long ere the shadow of a cloud encroaches on the unruffled sky bounded by our horizon, he perceives the coming storm, and prepares to seize such victims as he hopes may be delivered to him during the terrible convulsions. While all above is peace and serenity, he watches the internal combustion, and gloats over the slumbering city about to be inundated with a flood of burning lava, or swallowed in the yawning chasms of this quaking earth. He looks into man's wonderful frame, and with a practised skill that no refinement of mortal art can attain to, marks the seeds of incipient disease, as they take root, and tend, perhaps unsuspected by the heedless individual, to the harvest of death—too often, alas! a harvest of wrath and ruin. Omnipresence is not his; but motion quicker than our thoughts he can no doubt command; and with an army of zealous followers, so well trained to execute his behests, he may leave it in their hands to work out some deep laid schemes of his devising in one quarter, while he speeds to the uttermost parts of the earth to pursue the same employment, perhaps in a distinct form; perhaps so as to harmonize with, and to help forward the preceding mischief.

In order rightly to estimate the peril that we are in from this tremendous enemy, we must consider first, that all are sinners, condemned by the law of God; "that without shedding of blood there is no remission," and that, therefore, each individual believer may and must say of

Christ, He loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*. Christ will never overlook, or be indifferent to any soul for which he shed his precious blood: in their final salvation he sees the travail of his own soul, and is satisfied: and we have no lack of evidence that to wrest a single human being from the hand of the Saviour is an enterprise, however hopeless, in which Satan is content to embark all his energies; and to put into motion all the vast machinery placed at his disposal. He desires to have them that he may sift them as wheat; yet to judge by the language of many excellent people, it would seem as though they considered their own corrupt nature and evil tendencies as the only hindrance in the heavenly race. This is a dangerous mistake: the Bible shows us in a most impressive manner how our adversary works upon that nature which he first prevailed to corrupt. David, full of ease and abundance, meditates on the extent and stability of his wide kingdom, and Satan takes advantage of it to suggest an act that he knew would be highly displeasing to the Lord, and probably bring a judgment on the nation. "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." 1 Chron. xxi. 1. Even Joab, the most godless, unscrupulous man, and at the same time the most devoted subject and zealous patriot, saw the danger of this foolish act, and remonstrated against it. But the Devil had possessed the king's mind with a fancy in which he would not submit to be crossed, and the consequence was a destroying visitation on the land. Job was pious and prosperous,—the enemy attributed his godliness to his gains, and obtained leave to try him by heavy losses, calamities, and bodily sufferings; then stirred up his wife to counsel blasphemy and suicide, and failing of that, instigated his friends to tax him with hypocrisy, and to represent these afflictions as an evident judgment from God, sent to brand him in the sight of the world as a gross though secret transgressor. Of all his infernal devices this is one of the worst, and by no means unfrequent. Satan first, by the divine permission, afflicts a child of God, and then works on the pride, the rashness, the folly of some friend to pour corrosive acids into the wound where the softest oil of Christian

sympathy and love ought rather to trickle down.

The operator sees a cause and a need-be, for his friend's grievance far removed from those which the Lord saw when he smote: and taking this phantom of Satan's conjuring up for a reality, proceeds to do the arch-fiend's bidding by helping forward the affliction in a clumsy attempt to deal wisely with it. Thus he tormented Job, by means of his three friends, whom he also exposed to the Lord's severe displeasure by provoking them to such presumptuous sin; while Job, whose real fault was unrenewed blindness to the corruption of his nature, reaped a two-fold temporal, and a ten thousand-fold spiritual blessing from what the Devil hoped to turn to his destruction. Judas was of a covetous disposition, and would have been a thief whenever he had opportunity; but Satan marked him out for the deepest crime that it was possible for man to perpetrate once throughout all eternity. "Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot." (Luke xxii. 3.) What an awful expression is that! the chief adversary of God and man became for a time incarnate to oppose, and by opposing to accomplish, the great object of the Lord Jehovah in coming down to earth. He pervaded with his diabolical influence the mind and spirit of his willing victim, and led him on from the mere indulgence of avaricious thoughts to the terrible transgression for which no name can be found; then left him to despair, to suicide, and to hell. Ananias and Sapphira were doubly covetous: of lucre and of fame; they wanted both to keep their money, and to obtain applause for sacrificing it to the public good. Of this Satan took advantage to fill their hearts with a lie, by which they might hope to accomplish the desired end. But it was to the Holy Ghost that the lie was told, and instantaneous death was the penalty of seeking either to deceive the Lord, or to make Him connive at their guilt.

These instances exhibit the manner of Satan's working, where, but for what is revealed, we might suppose no such agency had existed. It was needful that Eve should be tempted from without, since the image of God yet remained within, and her heart, still holy and obe-

dient, would not have suggested a departure from the path of His commandments. But the idea of numbering Israel—taking a census—in time of peace, and under every favourable circumstance, appears so natural that we probably should not search beyond the king's desire to know the extent of Israel's population, had not the Holy Spirit expressly told us who provoked him to it. In like manner Job's calamities might be referred to the predatory habits of his Arab neighbours, to the sudden storms and blais of the desert, and to the bodily effects often produced by excessive mental suffering; while the erroneous view taken by his three friends was perfectly consistent with those frequently formed by ourselves, concerning others, when we should be loth to imagine that the Devil was prompting us. Judas might have been supposed to perpetrate his unparalleled crime under the impression that his Master would, as he had more than once before done, deliver himself by a miracle from the hands into which he was about to sell him: and Ananias with his wife, might have arranged their plan under the impulse of natural vanity, combined with love of money. Yet in all these cases we are distinctly told that Satan himself was present to instigate and direct; and many a recollection of our own past lives, now perhaps painful and self-condemnatory, would wring our hearts with anguish and horror if we knew how far the great adversary was concerned in them, and to what extent the will of God was resisted, the cause of Christ injured, and the Holy Ghost grieved, while evil spirits looked on rejoicing. We "give place to the Devil" daily; and nothing more effectually helps him to lead us into this breach of a positive command, than our readiness to forget his continual presence, either personally or by his active ministers; and perhaps to leave out of sight the fact of his very existence.

SECTION III.

SATANIC DARING.

THE truth being established that there exists a company of evil spirits, continu-

ally employed in resisting the power of God, and stirring up his creatures to rebel against his authority, it is not to be expected that in every instance cited as illustrating this truth, precise mention by name should be made of those who are clearly exhibited in that work. Very many cases may be adduced where such mention is distinctly made; and in tracing others to the same source, we must bear in mind the apostolic warning, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." James i. 13, 14. The plan, therefore, of Satan is to watch the indications of our prevailing corruptions, and to provide us with opportunities of gratifying them, that lust when it hath conceived may the more readily bring forth the sin which, as the enemy well knows, will, when it is finished, bring forth death.

Nor is it to the evil passions alone that he appeals; his daring knows no bounds. Even in the holy nature of the man Christ Jesus, as untainted by original or by actual sin, he could seek for somewhat whereon to build a powerful temptation. He had been incessantly assailing the patient Saviour in the wilderness, during forty days; at the end of which he saw him tortured by the cravings of a hunger, which the termination of his prescribed season of fasting left him at liberty to satisfy. Now it would have been every whit as easy for our Lord, by the putting forth of his infinite power, to transform a stone into bread, as to multiply five loaves to the satisfying of five thousand people; or out of the stones of the temple to raise up children unto Abraham. The desire for food was natural, lawful; yea, it was a duty to satisfy it, since prolonged abstinence must end in self-murder. We may indulge in guesses and suppositions as to the precise grounds on which the suggestion stood as a temptation of the Devil, but all that we can certainly know is, the fact, that so it was, and that as such it was rejected. Coming as it did in the shape of a proposal merely to satisfy a human want by means of his divine power, we see the deep craftiness of this insidious and perfidious tempter, and learn

a solemn lesson of perpetual watchfulness, and careful sifting of whatever is suggested to our minds, whether by outward circumstances, the counsel of friends, or the seemingly intuitive suggestions of our own minds: for he who assailed the Master will not spare the servant.

Again, the object of our Lord's incarnation was to wrest from Satan the kingship of the world; to cast him out of his possessions, to take the prey from the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive. This was to be accomplished by exceeding bitter sufferings, of which a foretaste was then present, in the pangs of extreme hunger. Humanity shrank from what Deity foreknew; and we have very touching statements from the evangelists, of the anguish that overwhelmed the blessed Jesus on the near approach of the climax of his woes. He was even brought to pray, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" *Matt. xxvi. 39.* Yet in all this not a taint of evil existed; it was the innocent shrinking of innocent, holy flesh, from intense tortures. Of this Satan seems to have taken his next advantage; for he exhibited to the divine object of his infernal artifices all the kingdoms of the world, with a reference to his own acknowledged sovereignty over them, and proposed terms on which he would consent to abdicate in favour of his dreaded opponent, so rendering needless the terrific conflict in which the Lord must engage to effect his expulsion by force. This was a most refined temptation: it proposed a single momentary act of homage, in acknowledgment of the existing supremacy of that enthroned rebel and traitor, to be followed by the instantaneous resignation of his usurped dominion into the hands of the rightful King. He saw the mortal frame drooping under prolonged inanition; he knew how closely the human mind naturally sympathized with the body's febleness: he calculated on the effect of forty days' endurance of hunger, thirst, weariness, solitude, and unsheltered exposure; and he, the Devil, the liar and the murderer, boldly ventured on a proposition, the nature of which sends a shudder through the heart of the Christian, for whose sake the Lord of Glory was exposed to such an indignity as this! But it gives a very terrible view of the

self-confident greatness of the adversary. May it sink deep into our minds, and fill us with that salutary fear which shall keep us ever mindful of the foe's devices.

The Lord's reply was strongly indignant; "Get thee hence, Satan!" But now this holy indignation, this desire to be freed from the presence of the archfiend, who had been harassing him for forty days and nights, this detestation of his odious suggestions, was next laid hold of as the ground-work of a third temptation. By the exercise of that mysterious power, of the nature of which we must remain ignorant, but ought never to be forgetful, the devil placed his destined conqueror on a pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem, and calling to his aid the Scriptures, which had been successfully opposed to his preceding attempts, he invited the Saviour to cast himself down; "*for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*" *Luke iv. 10, 11.* To be at once delivered from the immediate presence of Satan, and received into the arms of the holy angels; while to decline it was apparently to shrink not only from the proof of his divinity, but also from a test of individual faith in the promise of God: this was a snare, the craft and subtlety of which are not always sufficiently considered; nor the practical use of the lesson regarded. For, be it remembered, it was no necessary part of our redemption to make us acquainted with such a passage in our Lord's experience: the Holy Ghost has very sparingly revealed to us the particulars of what was by far the most grievous portion of his sufferings: we are not told what took place during the forty days, throughout the whole period of which *St. Luke* tells us, he was tempted of the devil. The thorny crown, the scourge, the nails, the spear, were the lot of many others, whose physical frames suffered, perhaps, no less exquisitely the pangs of a torturing death; but here we have a glimpse of mental and spiritual endurances, such as would crush the whole mass of guilty men—"the travail of his soul"—the "sorrows" and the "grief;" the heavy pressure wherewith "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." *Isaiah liii. 10.* We know

not what ensued, when, just previous to this fearful agony in the garden, the Lord said, "The Prince of this world cometh." John xiv. 30. Neither can we penetrate what was implied in the expression used to the wretched men who seized on him—"This is your hour, *and the power of darkness.*" Luke xxii. 53. Hereafter we shall doubtless know what in their present burdened state our spirits could not support: we shall better comprehend the nature and intensity of sufferings undergone by Him who poured out his soul unto death for us; but since what is given by inspiration is written for our learning, we may be assured that the scene so distinctly sketched of the mysterious encounter between the Son of righteousness and the prince of darkness, is intended to fill us with godly fear; to keep us watchful against the tremendous foe, and to endear to us the written word of the Old Testament, which some Christians are apt to slight; but which furnished the Captain of our salvation with weapons wherewith to repel the bold assailant. The deity of Jesus is the sword, from which Satan shrinks; and even in the brief, but inexpressibly momentous narrative referred to, there is observable a constant reference, on our Lord's part, to the eternal God, which appears calculated to remind the rebel that He, with whom he was presumptuously dealing, was yet the Lord his God. Some have represented this assault as planned by the evil one, to satisfy himself as to the fact of Jesus being the Christ: we cannot subscribe to this view: surely the prince of the devils was not worse informed than his subordinates, who, on the approach of our Lord, evermore yelled forth their confessions of his deity, and deprecating the visitation of his wrath. Satan knew full well, that the elect angels were no liars, like himself: and when in songs of joy and praise they announced to the shepherds the birth of "a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," he could not disbelieve their testimony. The particulars of that miraculous birth were not concealed from him; neither was the promise which God gave to Eve, or the prediction declared to Ahab unknown. Still less can we for a moment suppose that the testimony given just before, at the Lord's baptism, had escaped him. No; Satan knew with whom

he had to do; and well may we tremble, when we find him taking advantage of the purest concomitants of undefiled humanity, and with them tempting the Lord his God.

Scripture likewise unfolds to us many instances in which God's servants have been assailed by the enemy, under the feigned character of a divine influence, to confirm which he has put forth all his powers, and wrought wonders. A very remarkable instance of this is found in the story of Israel's deliverance: and though it is a part of his craft to lead men so to explain away the passages touching himself, as to neutralize in a great degree God's gracious purpose in dictating them, we are not bound to follow their glosses,—we may venture to take Scripture as we find it, and to believe that when the Holy Ghost says a thing, he means what he says, and not something else. The marvels that Satan wrought by means of Pharaoh's magicians were calculated not only to harden the heart of the tyrant against the truly miraculous manifestations of God's power, but also to stagger the faith of Moses and Aaron in the divine origin of their mission. We are not at liberty to call them juggling deceptions, as some do; mere sleight of hand tricks, performed by court conjurors: the word of God declares them to have been realities: and most instructive they are to us, who, looking for the national redemption and final restoration of Israel, according to the Lord's promise, now very near at hand, may expect to witness fearful things done in opposition to it by the power of Satan, who hates the Jew with an implacable hatred. We find the magicians of Egypt doing what man, without supernatural aid could never have accomplished. "Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments; for they cast down every man his rod, and they became (not they seemed to become) serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." Exod. vii. 11, 12. Here was a great wonder wrought by the power of Satan, but overruled to the fuller proof of the mighty work of God. When Moses turned the water into blood, the magicians did the same, but of course on a very small scale, since there could be but little left for them to practise upon.

Again, they were able to imitate a miracle, by bringing up frogs upon the land; but now the power of Satan ended; the next wonder was one of creation, and life, even the lowest order of animal life is not his to bestow. He can kill, when permitted; but to make alive was never given to him. His agents essayed to bring up frogs, from the recesses where they were hidden, and succeeded; but when they attempted to bring forth lice from the dust of the earth, they utterly failed. It does not appear that after this they ventured on increasing the swarms of flies, as they had done that of frogs; or to smite the cattle of the children of Israel, when the Lord had destroyed those of the Egyptians: and the next visitation drove them out of the royal presence, covered with loathsome sores which their infernal master had no power to heal.

How encouraging is this to us! Satan may do much to terrify, to perplex, and to afflict us; but as soon as he touches on a single attribute of the Most High, he fails, and is put to flight. Yet to make it appear that what he does is done immediately by the Lord, is almost always his plan. Thus we find, when destroying the flocks of Job and their attendants, he so managed his elements of destruction, that the terrified messenger of evil tidings described it as a divine visitation: "The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them." Job 1. 16. It could not but dreadfully aggravate the affliction of the righteous man, to regard these sore trials as marks of the Lord's indignation, proceeding directly from Him: and no doubt it was so arranged to add power to the detestable suggestion conveyed through his wife. But though Job believed the lie, his faith in God's love failed not; by faith he endured, and through faith he triumphed. If we do not distinctly see in what manner faith acts as a shield, or how effectually it quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked it is because we do not sufficiently search the Scriptures. They abound with glorious illustrations: and the path of safety is so clearly laid down that the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein, if they simply attend to the indications given. To those who study it with prayer, as a book writ-

ten not for the learned, but for "the poor of this world," the "fools," the "babes," to whom the Lord has declared that he will make his wonders of salvation known, the Bible is of all works the most intelligible: only rendered otherwise by the foolish "wisdom of this world," holding up its moonlight to make the sun visible. Satan owes much even to the best of commentators; for they have frequently assisted to veil both his person and his devices, by their ill-judged attempts at elucidation, which taken in their literal sense, God's words would have revealed important practical truths respecting him.

We are dwelling principally on the display of satanic presumption as the usurping god of this world: the means by which that usurpation was effected, present a fearful view of his daring self-reliance. In his very first approach to our unhappy race, then rejoicing, in sinless felicity, he deliberately contradicted the express declaration of the Most High God; and appealing, as afterwards, in the case of the second Adam, to a perfectly innocent, laudable desire, he stirred up Eve to seek higher attainments in knowledge, a clearer perception of good, as opposed to evil; then stimulating this thirst for information beyond due bounds—leading it to overpass the landmark of submission to the Divine will, he accomplished at once what must have appeared to himself a most hazardous undertaking. To represent God as a liar could not but be congenial to the diabolical nature of the accursed spirit of evil; but that a creature so formed to know, to love, and to serve the Lord, surrounded on all sides with the profusion of his bounty, and continually drinking from the fountain of all spiritual, all intellectual, all physical enjoyment, under His paternal hand,—that such a creature should at the first word be persuaded to credit the lie, and to rush into open transgression, must have been marvellous in the eyes of the tempter. How marvellous in ours must be the extreme daring that prompted him to the enterprise.

After such a proof of the weakness of human nature, while yet wholly untainted with sin, and the observation during many ages of the frightful depravity into which a being, originally created after the image

of God, might easily be led, it becomes less inconceivable that Satan should have availed himself of the permission given to assault the man, Christ Jesus; for be it always remembered, that only by permission could he approach the Saviour. We are distinctly told, that after the baptism and public recognition from heaven of our blessed Lord, preparatory to his ministerial, or prophetic work upon earth, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." Matt. iv. 1. However high, however powerful, however privileged the great adversary may be, during the time of his yet remaining unbound, still, in the sight of God, he is equally helpless and contemptible, as he is hateful. He durst not even utter an extenuating word when his doom was pronounced, together with that of his wretched victims: he cannot hurt a hair on the head of one of Christ's meanest followers, without a special leave so to do; and then he cannot overpass the precise boundary of his permitted machinations. "Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days." Rev. ii. 10. Some, not all, he should have leave to cast into prison, and they only that they might be tried, not destroyed; and their trial should continue ten days, not a minute longer. His commission, no doubt, is much larger with respect to those who are still in "the snare of the devil; who are taken captive by him at his will," (2 Tim. ii. 26,) and who will ultimately share his burning abode for ever, if they turn not to Christ for deliverance; but the blessed work of the Gospel preached unto man is "to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith which is in Christ;" Acts xxvi. 18; and when this is once accomplished, the devil is compelled to recognize the indwelling power and presence of his conqueror in them; and without a special leave, granted for some wise purpose, "That wicked one toucheth them not."

SECTION IV.

SATANIC CUNNING.

BOLD as he is, and potent as he is, Satan rarely goes to work in a straightforward manner. He is still the old serpent, accomplishing by craft his insidious purposes, gliding stealthily on the path of his intended victim, and concealing himself beneath the innocent flowers with which the Creator has bountifully clad that path. In some parts of the world he does indeed enforce upon his bond-slaves the horrible service of worshipping him openly and by name, in order to deprecate the temporal mischief that they know he is able and willing to do them; but, generally, he veils himself under fictitious names and forms, so obtaining to himself and his angels the honor and service that are due to God alone. St. Paul tells us this: "What say I then? that the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." 1 Cor. x. 19, 20, 21. Satan persuades the poor heathen that some divine power resides in a beast, a reptile, a stone or the stock of a tree; and having induced him to worship it, takes to himself and to his gang of devils the honours paid to the senseless idol. Well may he be termed the god of this world! To all of its successive empires, crumbling into dust as they have done, he has been the object of supreme homage. The Babylonian might fall prostrate before his gigantic idol of gold; the Persian breathe his devout aspirations to the fiery orb of day; the Greek rejoice in his sculptured forms of exquisite beauty, and in the endless mysteries of an impure worship; the stern Roman might crowd his pantheon with the captured idols of every nation, and enlarge his unholy creed for the reception of each foreign fable; but in all, and over all, Satan ruled. Wherever idolatry is found, there is Satan the god of the worshippers. His voice was heard

in the lowing of the Egyptian abomination, in the decree that prostrated the glory of the Chaldeans on the plain of Dura, and in every incentive to creature-worship under whatsoever form observed, and by whatsoever sanctions confirmed. The voice that from the Minaret proclaims the true prophetic character of Mahomet, is his; the bell that tinkles forth a signal for the admiration of a wafer-god, is sounded by him: yea, the secret whisper from within that withholds the hand about to extend the gift of charity, is the voice of his power too, for "covetousness is idolatry." Col. iii. 5. By fraudulent cunning, under a thousand manifestations, he upholds his unseen, acknowledged dominion; never to be overthrown till the Stone, cut out without hands, shall smite the huge image of universal idolatry, and gathering to itself the little, faithful band of protesters against his multifarious devil-worship, so fill the earth as to thrust out of it whatsoever resists the extension of that Stone's triumphant kingdom.

To adduce instances of all the devices of Satan's cunning recorded by or to be clearly inferred from the Holy Scriptures would be little less than to transcribe the Bible itself: we may however mention some few, where diabolical interference is expressly spoken of. The Scriptures do not often explain the part that the tempter and his hosts took in the toils, the struggles, the sins of the Old Testament church: but under the gospel dispensation, enough is revealed to enable us to trace his workings in former times, even where he was not specified by name. Who can fail to see this in the touching history of Joseph? When the youth declared his dream, the meaning was evident to his father, and his brothers were compelled to see it in the same light, galling as it was to their pride. Their envious, angry dispositions gave occasion for the tempter to assail them, and to suggest the cruel expedient by which, as they hoped, the "dreamer" was finally put out of their way; and in the varied persecutions that followed the blameless young believer, the malice of an adversary, potent and crafty, like Satan, may be plainly discerned. When the children of Israel corrupted themselves and made a golden calf, and worshipped it in the name of the Lord,

the artful adaptation to their circumstances of the idolatrous abominations that they had seen in Egypt no doubt originated in the same quarter: while the continual outbursts of discontent, disobedience, strife, and open rebellion against their leader, that marked the progress of the rescued tribes through the wilderness, all bear witness to his influence among them. Recollecting, as it has already been observed, that the Holy Ghost declares idol-worship to be devil-worship, we have positive proof that Satan and his legions presided over the heathen nations who surrounded the camp of Israel; and all the seductive arts practised by Balaam and others, to ensnare the Lord's people into forbidden paths, were certainly of his devising. Moses, when writing, as he is supposed to have done, the book of Job, must have received a very clear revelation concerning the power and activity of this fearful foe, although the record that he was commissioned to leave of his own people's history, makes precise mention of the evil one, as personally interfering with them: but he says, in the Lord's name, of the Israelites, "They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring;" Lev. xvii. 7; and again, "They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not." Deut. xxxii. 17. While against the sin of witchcraft, the acquirement of power or knowledge by means of Satanic communications, the law was very strict. "A man, also, or woman, that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them." Lev. xx. 27. By this we see, that Satan had contrived to obtain a footing among God's peculiar people; that he had seduced them into holding intercourse with his subordinates for the purpose of sharing such supernatural gifts as he could impart; and secretly, by fraud and cunning, maintained this ground in the bosom of the visible Church. Most earnestly were they warned against this, the great condemning sin of the nations of Canaan: "There shall not be found among you any one... that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a

charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee." Deut. xviii. 10—12. That this peculiar mode of destroying God's people was persisted in by the crafty enemy to the very time of our Lord's appearance in the flesh, we have constant proof. When Abimelech, the son of Gideon, by a cruel conspiracy with the men of Shechem, slew his brethren, and obtained the chief power, the Lord defeated and punished both the guilty parties by sending an evil spirit to embroil them to their mutual destruction—a business well suited to the malignant subtlety of a devil; to whose suggestions, no doubt, or to those of one like him, the young man owed his successful progress in treachery so far. When Saul greatly offended the Lord, his chastisement was heavy: "The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." 1 Sam. xvi. 14. Thus commissioned, the evil spirit gave that unhappy king no rest, during the period of his visitations; but alternately depressed with melancholy, cankered with envy, and inflamed with murderous rage the mind of his victim; impelling him even to hurl a javelin at the loving, dutiful son, whose generosity interposed between him and the ill-requited minstrel, from whose holy strains of music the tormenting devil had so often fled. When the same monarch, in the near prospect of his last fatal battle, consummated his offences by seeking one who had a familiar spirit, and requiring of her the exercise of what he, as the Lord's vicergerent, was solemnly bound to suppress, and if detected, to punish with death, we find him answered according to his folly, and driven to utter despair by the seeming success of an accursed spell. 1 Sam. xxviii.

Much has been written to elucidate, and not a little to explain away that extraordinary scene at En-dor; but when all has been said that man can say, there the brief, plain record stands, exactly as they found it, and all the wisdom of the wise fails to throw light on what God has left obscure. The word of God expressly declares that it was Samuel. "And Sam-

uel said to Saul"—verse 15. "Then said Samuel"—16. Saul "was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel"—20. The terror, too, of the woman, and her remarkable expression, "I saw gods ascending out of the earth," v. 13, would plainly imply, that her incantations had been followed by something wholly different from what she anticipated; she had invoked devils, but "gods," probably bright angelic beings, made visible to her for some wise purpose, appeared, bearing with them the resuscitated body of the buried seer, commissioned to assure the king that he and his sons should, on the morrow, be numbered with Samuel and the rest of the dead. We have no reason to suppose that the inspired narrative is otherwise than simply true: indeed, there is a daring presumption in questioning it: "Let God be true, and every man a liar." Rom. iii. 4. Least of all may we listen to those who would, in this case, as in that of Pharaoh's enchanter, represent witchcraft as a mere juggling imposition on the senses of the credulous; and ascribe the woman's astonishment, not to the angelic character of those who came at the call, but to the appearance of any spiritual being whatever when she had only meant to play off a deception on the king. We ought rather to hail it as a glorious proof of the Lord's watchful care over the dust, yea, over the names of his own people, which he will not suffer devils to tamper with; and whatever difficulties remain to baffle our inquisitiveness, let them teach us humility, and remind us that "secret things belong unto the Lord our God;" Deut. xxix. 29; and that it is not to believers the description ought to apply, "intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshy mind." Col. ii. 18.

That devils continued to pollute the land of Canaan, and to exercise their wicked ingenuity in leading the Lord's people to transgress, we have sufficient testimony. Ezekiel sets before us an awful picture of the abominations committed in Jerusalem by those practices which the Lord had denounced as sacrificing unto devils. In the eighth chapter of his prophecy, he relates what he saw in the "chambers of imagery:" followed by a description of the vengeance to be taken: and Zechariah, prophesying of mercy to

be shown when the Lord shall heal the breach of his people, has this promise: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I will cut off the names of idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembered: and also, I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land." Zech. xiii. 2. By what artifices these evil creatures opposed the work of God, we are, however, far more distinctly shown in the New Testament, where we find their nature, operations, and objects laid open in a wonderful manner by Him who came upon the strong man, took away his armour wherein he trusted, and divided his spoils.

One specimen of deep cunning is given in the very first instance, particularly related of a case of possession: it occurs in the eighth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel. "And when he was come to the other side of the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass that way. And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? And there was a good way off from them a herd of many swine feeding; so the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out they went into the herd of swine: and behold the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters." Here we see, first, the deprecatory cry of the fiends; acknowledging the omnipotence of the Lord, but pleading that the set time for tormenting them in the fiery pit was not yet come. They are good calculators of prophetic periods, and perfectly knew that their time on earth had not expired. Next, they made a request, the drift of which we could not have seen but for the effects that followed its success. They asked leave to enter the swine; blessed be God! Satan has no power even over unclean beasts, unless it be especially given of the Lord. Having permission, they instantly availed themselves of it by drowning every one of the herd in the sea; and by this manœuvre

they so alarmed the neighbouring inhabitants, who could expect no less from such a beginning than that the unknown visiter would destroy all their property, as to prompt a general request that he would depart out of their coasts. Thus for the time, was the dreaded gospel averted from a whole city, by the exceeding craft of these devils; and in permitting their vile contrivance to succeed, the Lord mercifully provided a rich warning lesson for his church, to the end of time. May we all have grace to use it effectually in our wrestling contest with the principalities and powers of darkness!

Another mode of undermining where they durst not openly attack, was practised against the teaching of the Apostles. In Acts xvi. 16, we have the account. "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying; the same followed Paul and us, saying, These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this she did many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour." In this, as in the preceding case, the devil's device is shown by its fruits. His object in thus following and publicly testifying to the divine origin of the Apostle's teaching was probably two-fold. While allowed to continue it, he might expect to cast a slur on the doctrine in which a devil could thus approvingly seem to acquiesce, while a professed witch appeared as a daily follower of those who taught it; and if he provoked them to expel him, he might justly calculate on the vengeance of her masters, which overtook them immediately, and before night they were scourged, imprisoned, and made fast in the stocks. Seeing that all this was through the cunning of a devil, it is peculiarly delightful to proceed in the story, and find the whole overruled of God to the conversion of the keeper of the prison, and all his household, the shame of the unjust magistrates who had beaten them, and the honourable acquittal and dismissal of the Apostles from the place; where, no doubt, events so extraordinary

were blessed to the conviction of many; the church at Philippi being, as we find by his epistle to it, an especial cause of thankfulness and joy to Paul.

Another instance had previously occurred, where a sorcerer, one who avowedly held communion with evil spirits, and through their workings in him merited the severe rebuke, "O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness," had endeavoured to turn away a Roman deputy from the faith; and here the Lord manifested himself by showing that all the sorceries of Elymas, and his pretended sanctity, could not avert from him the stroke of instant blindness, which, to mark it as a direct visitation from on high, was announced by Paul the moment before he overtook him; and this wonder confirmed the deputy in the faith. Acts xiii. 6—12. One more instance we have in Simon Magus, who was also a sorcerer, and who seemed to have been delivered from the dominion of evil spirits, by the preaching of the gospel, being able to make such a confession of faith as entitled him to baptism. In him the devil sought to bring a deadly disgrace on the Church of Christ, by obtaining the power of conferring the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost on whomsoever he would; or if the idea of being able to buy the gift of God with money appear too foolish to have been really entertained by a spiritual being, we may suppose that he calculated on making the very proposal, from a professed worshipper, redound to the disadvantage of that church. In either case he was baffled. Peter was enabled to "perceive" that this seeming convert was still in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, and rebuked him openly; while the record of the attempt serves to this day as an invaluable preservative against certain unscriptural views of baptism that have crept into the church.

By considering in how many instances under the Old Testament dispensation, characters appeared, and events occurred parallel to these which meet us under the clearer light of the New, we may trace such hindrances and stumblings among the saints of old to the deep-laid plots of the rulers of the darkness of this world; and by such an enlarged view of the ene-

my's sphere of action, we may learn to be more earnest in praying that "all those evils which the craft and subtlety of the devil or man worketh against us may be brought to naught;" and may also become more watchfully alert in seeking to baffle his devices.

SECTION V.

SATANIC CRUELTY.

It seems almost superfluous to devote a section to this subject, seeing that everything we can name respecting Satan and his angels, comes under the head of cruelty. From the first attempt of the devil to seduce Eve from her allegiance, his object has always been to plunge the whole human race into the bottomless pit, which he knows to be his own portion, "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." Rev. xxi. 8. But though he generally tempts men with the promise, or possession of present enjoyment, alluring them to sell their souls for worldly profit, still, whenever he can have his own way, he produces present calamities, and heaps upon his wretched victims tribulation and anguish as well in possession as in prospect.

On many occasions noted in the scripture, God, by his own arm, or by his holy angels, has punished the transgressor; but we find him in the majority of instances, giving offenders into the hand of Satan, or of wicked men who act under his influence, for punishment. It is mentioned by the Psalmist, though not by Moses, that among the inflictions dealt forth to the tyrannic Egyptians, this was the greatest; and the force of the expression is very remarkable: after detailing the plagues of blood, of flies, of frogs, of caterpillars, of locusts, of hail, frost, and thunderbolts, the inspired writer goes on:—"He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them." Psalm lxxviii. 49. When Satan sends an evil angel, he will sorely afflict the object of his mission; but when God looses the restraints of these malignant

creatures, and bids them smite, it is terrible indeed!

We must again recall that most important truth, that whatsoever worship is rendered to any but God, is rendered to devils; and we shall be appalled at the scene of present, temporal cruelty, and suffering laid open as the direct work of evil spirits. Moloch, the great idol of the heathen among whom Israel sojourned, was worshipped by the immolation of children, butchered by the knife and by fire; and it was awful to think that the Lord's own people were ensnared to join in this frightful abomination. "They sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood." Psalm cvi. 37, 38. If the Holy Ghost had not caused this to be written by inspiration for our warning, we could not imagine the possibility of Satanic power, cunning, and cruelty, reaching to this point: that parents should be willing to take their tender, helpless babes, and deliver them over to a most agonizing form of assassination, as an act of homage to the powers of hell, while they themselves were actually fed, day by day, with manna from heaven sent down by the merciful God, who quenched their hourly thirst with water flowing from a stony rock, and miraculously following them through the wilderness; where every step of their way was marked by some wonder of supernatural care, and all endearing love. Here, indeed, must vile human nature lay its unclean lip in the dust; and here may proud man learn to tremble at the dreadful sovereignty exercised by Satan over all who are not translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God, by living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Although every form of idolatry, or devil-worship, was not so murderous as that of Moloch, cruelty was, and is, the distinguishing feature of all. In a passage already quoted, when the Lord tells his faithful Church of Smyrna that he will, for the trial of their faith, give Satan power over some of them, the consequences are, of course to be imprisonment and tribulation. We may judge from the manner of his dealing with Job, what use

Satan naturally makes of any such indulgence. Calamities were heaped on the patient man faster than the tongues of his messengers could utter them. Blood and slaughter, burning and crushing, were the immediate indications of the devil's temporary authority over his possessions and his family; and when he was permitted to touch the body of his victim, he left him no sound part, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, but transformed every particle of healthful flesh into a loathsome and agonized sore. Not satisfied with this, he stirred up the very person who should have been the soother of his sorrows and the strengthener of his faith, to prompt the self commission of what Satan himself was withheld from doing; for there can be little doubt that her wicked suggestion to "curse God, and die," implied the act of self-murder, to be committed in blasphemous defiance of the Lord. But here the adversary prevailed not; God had permitted him to break the hedge set about Job's temporal possessions and comforts, but his life and his soul were still secured. Failing in this, with what refinement of prolonged cruelty did the arch fiend instigate his professed comforters to help forward Job's affliction.

Man's destruction is indeed the regular employment of Satan. The Apostle Peter tells us, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. v. 8. Like "the young lions roaring after their food," he prowls about, hoping to find some one forsaken of God, and left as a prey to his teeth. That this does sometimes happen, even with reference to the Lord's people, we are clearly told. Paul expresses it, when directing the Corinthian Church how to act towards a heinous offender, who having given place to the devil, was now doomed to experience the nature of that service for which he had cast away the easy yoke of Christ. "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the

Lord Jesus." 1 Cor. v. 3—5. It appears, however, that on giving proof of very deep sorrow, and unfeigned repentance, the transgressor was received again, after experiencing, no doubt, for a time, what it was to be under the temporal power of the evil one. Another case of this sort is also mentioned by the same apostle. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. It would appear from this, that a temporary endurance of the devil's power is sometimes seen needful for the perverse children of God, in order to terrify them by the foretaste of what an eternal subjection to so cruel a master must be: and Satan knows the length of his chain, he is probably quite aware when correction, not destruction, is all that he is licensed to inflict. Accordingly he makes the most of his time, not lulling and soothing them in their guilt, as with those who are wholly his own, but striving, as he did with Job, to render them desperate under the rod, that they may either run into despairing sin, "curse God, and die," or else, as was near being the case with the Corinthian offender, may utterly faint and perish, being "swallowed up of overmuch sorrow."

The Bible does not specify the particular cruelties practised under various forms of idolatry; but from what is perpetrated in the dark places of the earth at this day, we may judge of Satan's habitual proceedings among his worshippers. Human sacrifices, accompanied with circumstances of most horrible barbarity, are common in many parts of the world: mothers are required to butcher their tender infants, children their aged parents, and vast numbers of all ages are frequently put to death, as an offering to the spirit of a deceased ruler, or to be attendants on his soul in another world. Self-immolation is enforced as a sacred duty; and if not willingly performed, the reluctant victim is murdered. On harmless animals most cruel tortures, are inflicted, as an acceptable service to the devils whom the heathen seek to propitiate; and in that nominally Christian system, of which the "coming is after the working of Satan," (2 Thess. ii. 9.)

whose teachers are "seducing spirits," and its distinguishing requirements "doctrines of devils," (1 Tim. iv. 1,) we find the Satanic feature of wanton cruelty developed in full deformity. The rack is its main instrument of conversion to an idolatrous faith; and the flames its award to such as will not venture to encounter everlasting burnings. Massacre on a scale only bounded by the number of its defenceless victims, and the limits of its physical power, persecution, to the utmost stretch of human endurance, these are the lot of its opponents; while for the members of its own system it has the discipline of the scourge, of famishing hunger, of bodily austerity in every imaginable shape; and a merciless rending apart of every tie that God has formed to sweeten the cup of human life. In all this we should recognise the cruel hand of him who was a murderer from the beginning, even had not the word of God so distinctly set him forth as the framer and upholder of Popery, as to warrant our numbering among Scripture evidences, what the prophetic page describes in the passages already quoted from St. Paul; and in those of John, when describing the Beast which he saw rising out of the sea. He says, "The dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." Rev. xiii. 2. In the preceding chapter we are told (ver. 9) that the dragon is "that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world:" and again, of the Beast to whom he gave his power, it is written, "It was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them," xiii. 7. The predictions of the Bible are no less certain than its historical relations; and if we desire an instance of the sustained cruelty of Satan, manifested through a space of twelve hundred years and upwards, not among barbarous people who never heard of the true God, but in the heart, and throughout the extent of Christendom, we must look at Popery—the Babylon of prophecy, concerning whom it is said, "Babylon the great . . . is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Rev. xviii. 2.

The cases of those possessed with devils is represented as being nearly always one

of great suffering. The exceptions seem to be those instances where the infernal inmate was a welcome confederate, for the sake of such supernatural powers as he could confer. Such was the "spirit of divination" possessed by the damsel who followed Paul and Silas; the "familiar spirits" that enabled Simon Magus, Elymas, and others, to practise sorcery; and the awful entering in of Satan himself into Judas Iscariot, who went and completed his tremendous bargain under that devilish influence.

Among the many descriptions of demoniacal cruelty inflicted on the poor creatures who were brought to our Lord or to his apostles, we may notice the daughter of the Syro-Phenician woman, who was "grievously vexed with a devil." Matt. xv. 22. The poor boy whose father gave so piteous a description of his sufferings, afterwards confirmed it in the presence of our Lord. "Master, I have brought unto thee my son which hath a dumb spirit; and whenever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away." Mark ix. 17, 18. "And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him," v. 22. "And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him, and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, he is dead;" v. 26. The description also, as given by the same evangelist, of the demoniac from whom the devils passed into the swine, is very awful. "A man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains; because he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." Mark v. 2-5. Again, we read, "There was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself." Luke xiii. 11: and that this was a visitation of Satanic cruelty, our Lord in express terms reveals. "Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound to these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the

Sabbath day?" v. 16. We read, too, of "one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb." Matt. xii. 22. The last act of these fiends was always, when permitted, a cruel one: they "rent" or "threw down" their victims, when departing, though restrained from fatally injuring them. Thus it was with the man in the synagogue, who had a spirit of an unclean devil, which testified, in evident terror, to our Lord's divinity; for he "cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him down in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not." Luke iv. 33, 34, 35. When Paul, through the abundance of revelations vouchsafed to him, was in danger of becoming puffed up, a chastening hand was laid on him, by giving Satan power to afflict his body, in some way not particularized. He calls it "a thorn in the flesh; the messenger of Satan sent to buffet me." 2 Cor. xii. 7. It was grievous, for he thrice besought the Lord, that it might depart from him: it was visible, and humbling to human pride, for he gratefully mentions it to the praise of the Galatians, that it did not lessen their regard for him, or their reverence for his mission. "Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel to you at first: and my temptation, which was in my flesh, ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." Gal. iv. 13, 14.

In all these, and many other instances, we find, that the power of Satan, to whatever extent it is carried, is always cruelly oppressive: Peter testifies of our Lord Jesus, that he "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." Acts x. 38. But grievous as were the sufferings that Satan inflicted on the bodies of those over whom he had liberty to tyrannize, they were as nothing compared with what he can do when assaulting the mind. We do not here speak of such as knowingly act upon his vile suggestions, but of those who are the unconscious, or defenceless objects of his

covert attacks. On this subject the book of God does not furnish us with descriptions of many individual cases; it rather shows us the machinery at work, and enables us, each from his own experience, to judge of the universal results. There is not an impulse of our nature, nor a faculty of our minds, nor an inclination of our hearts—there is not a duty, there is not an enjoyment, there is not a trouble, but Satan both can and will lay hold of it to tempt, to harass, to oppress our souls. Hence, from age to age, every believer, how great soever his privileges, and how happy soever his experience, must often take up the apostle's language, and secretly confess, that "we that are in this tabernacle, do groan, being burdened." 2 Cor. v. 4. And the nearer a Christian endeavours to follow the steps of Paul, in active employment for the Lord's cause among men, the more surely will he have to join in his testimony, who spoke so touchingly of his inward trials, "serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations." Acts xx. 19.

In what manner Satan afflicted the affectionate Peter is fully detailed; and no one who loves the Lord Jesus can for a moment doubt, that the agonies of his mind were far greater and more intolerable than any bodily suffering whatever could possibly have been. He was grieved to hear his adored Master predict the desertion of his disciples, and said, "Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Matt. xxvi. 33. Our Lord, in reply, assured him, that before the cock next crew he should thrice have denied him; and Peter, as yet little aware of the power of his invisible adversary, and his own miserable weakness, reiterated the confident declaration, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee;" v. 35. St. Luke records that the Lord also addressed him, "Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat;" Luke xxii. 31; thus plainly declaring whose was the cruel work; and when, after forsaking that gentle, loving Master, leaving him in the hands of his foes, and cautiously, at a safe distance, stealing after, to watch what should become of him whom he had just declared he would

follow to prison and to death, the too confident servant was led by the devil to deny that he even knew his Lord, and to confirm the lie with oaths and curses: how dreadful must have been his feelings at the moment—how agonizing the tortures of his conscience, when the look of his compassionate Lord, suddenly turned upon him at the crowing of the cock, brought his sin home to his bosom with all its aggravations! He could not fall at the feet of the captive—he could by no possibility approach him through the phalanx of weapons that hemmed him in. He could not cause the voice of his passionate supplication to reach that patient ear; nor could he hear from the beloved lip the word of pardon. Probably the countenance turned upon him with that heart-breaking look, was already bruised by the ruffian stroke of his persecutors; and, though we may fairly believe that the power of God, acting without a word spoken, at that moment drove Satan from his diabolical work in the mind of Peter, with what unmixed anguish of soul must the apostle have recalled his cruel desertion, and insulting denial of his blessed Master: while John, who had professed nothing more than others, was boldly exposing himself to the peril of a recognition in the midst of the judgment hall. All had forsaken Jesus and fled, "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled;" and for this no Satanic influence was necessary. The weakness of human nature, wholly unassisted by divine strength, would suffice to hurry a handful of unarmed men from the presence of a hostile band, with weapons and torches, who had taken captive their leader, the root of all their confidence. This panic over, John was enabled instantly to return and to tread, as near as he could approach him, the steps of his Lord: so presenting a contrast to Peter's treachery, which made the latter at once inexcusable and doubly odious in the eyes of the unhappy culprit himself. To us the story is most important: it was Satan's hour, as the Lord had declared. The prince of this world came, and had nothing in Him; but in every one of us, he has enough to furnish a broad ground for any temptation that he may choose to bring; and the ferocious cruelty of his dealing against the heart and conscience

of the poor, weak fisherman, at that season of bitter sorrow and irreparable bereavement, may teach us a lesson of continual watchfulness and prayer, that we may be able to resist the wiles of the devil.

Cruelty is altogether a Satanic quality; it could not exist but for him. God is love, and all that God made was innocent, lovely, loving, till sin entered in, to defile, and Satan got power to destroy. In testimony to this, we have the predictions that point to the period when Satan shall be bound, and earth be wholly free from his influence. Thus cruelty in all its forms shall disappear. "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Isaiah ii. 4. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the fating, and the young lion together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed—their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." Isaiah xi. 6—9. Such will be the consequence of removing the originator of all wickedness, the instigator of all cruelty from the earth, and re-establishing the reign of love.

SECTION VI.

SATANIC ACTIVITY.

"THE angel of the bottomless pit" is called Abaddon, or Apollyon, a destroyer, (Rev. ix. 11,) and in the work of destruction his activity is indeed great. When we reflect on the extent of our globe, on the number of its inhabitants—an ever-changing, ever-increasing population—during almost sixty centuries, and the vast varieties of mind, temper, disposition, and circumstances that prevent the history of any one among them from being the history of any other; when, too, we remember that of all these multitudes not one

has escaped the temptation of the devil, and that the main bulk of the whole have been doing his will, promoting his interests, and acting in harmony with his general design, in the face of all the evidences that crowd around them to the being and power of a holy, just, and beneficent God—we surely must discern the characteristic of amazing activity, in him who keeps so mighty a host true to his interests, and blind to their own.

When Noah preached righteousness to the men of his generation, and verified his warnings by preparing before their eyes the ark which was to preserve all flesh that did not perish in the coming deluge, he made not a single convert to his doctrine; and the angel of the bottomless pit swept off the whole generation of men into his own abode, one family only being reserved. Scarcely was that reserved family re-established on earth's surface, when he beguiled the godly patriarch into an act of intemperance; and this transgression the enemy also turned to such advantage, that it laid a third part of his progeny under a malediction, of which Satan well knew how to avail himself for farther mischief. He fastened on the posterity of Canaan with peculiar tenacity and plunged them into every abomination. So far as the Bible traces their history we find it one of perpetual crime and suffering; and at this day, their condition, physical, moral, and spiritual, is a blot on the name and nature of man. What prodigious activity has he shown, and how extensively, how unremittingly have the rulers of the darkness of this world debased and afflicted the children of Canaan!

Shem had a blessing, and Japheth also, which Satan could not hope to reverse; but against each of their races he has prevailed in a signal manner, and to this day he glories in the triumph achieved. From Shem, a single family was chosen, to be blessed above all the nations of the earth, and to be a universal blessing. To them were committed the laws and the oracles of God; through them alone was He revealed, and his will made known to the world; and above all, of them was to come that seed of the woman, promised even in the hour of man's transgression, who should bruise the serpent's head, and

finally destroy him and his works. The history of Israel is a continued history of Satanic diligence: he led Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, into acts of most sinful dissimulation; Sarah, into tyranny and injustice; Rebecca and Leah into most gross deceit. In them he indeed exhibited himself as the father of lies; and in the sons of Jacob, proved himself the "murderer from the beginning." He stirred up the King of Egypt to destroy their progeny, by oppression, and by bloodshed; and to resist the delivering hand of the Lord, until the waters of the Red Sea swept the whole mighty host of Egypt at once into hell. He then followed the rescued people through the wilderness, exciting them to every species of provocation that might compel the Lord to destroy them; and succeeded even in drawing them to forsake the worship of their own God, the Lord of heaven and earth, for that of devils. While Moses was absent, receiving from Jehovah the law which had been promulgated with such fearful majesty but a few days before from Mount Sinai, and while the mountain yet smoked with fire from heaven, Satan drew them into idolatry the most gross; even surpassing that of the Egyptians; for what they worshipped was the mysterious, though irrational creation of God, while the Israelites paid divine homage to what, but the day before, had dangled from their own ears. The terrible example made did not reclaim them; they went on to transgress, and were soon drawn into an active participation of the idolatrous sin of the Canaanites, whom they had been commanded for that very sin to destroy. Balaam had no power to curse Israel, but he prevailed by Satan's subtlety, to make them curse themselves. After many generations had passed away, each exceeding the former in iniquity, the revolt became so grievous, that ten out of the twelve tribes were cast off; delivered up to themselves and to Satan, and whither he has conducted them, or where they now abide, no man knoweth.

The two that were left, instead of taking warning by their dreadful fate, went on to provoke the Lord to jealousy, until they too, in righteous though reluctant judgment, were delivered into the hands of their enemies for severe chastisement:

and this had such an effect on them, that, as a body, all the wiles of the devil have not prevailed again to involve them in the guilt of idolatry. This, which had been the powerful engine of Satan for so many ages, now failed; and did he therefore abandon the hopeless task of inviting them to rebellion? No: his craft—which may the Lord speedily and for ever confound!—discovered another mode of rendering void the gracious purposes of God toward them: and he gradually substituted for the immutable, perfect law of Jehovah, the commandments of vain, foolish men: he first encumbered, then superseded the written word, by means of traditions, which, being reduced to writing, usurped the place of Holy Scripture; and by that means so completely blinded the eyes, and hardened the heart of the chosen people, that when, at the appointed time, the Deliverer, the Messiah, the Lord whom they looked for, suddenly came, they despised, rejected, hated, and crucified him!

For this, destruction, terrible destruction, came upon them: and alas! not to the pages of the Bible, but to the streets of our own cities, the hovels of our own villages must we turn, to know what, through the hateful devices of the devil, has befallen Israel—to see how the Lord hath dealt with the dearly-beloved of his soul. The contemplation is enough to weigh down the most rejoicing spirit, in bitter grief and despondency: but, blessed be the Lord! this dispensation of wrath is well nigh passed away. "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof." Psalm cii. 13, 14.

When the Lord Jesus appeared among the people, who for many centuries had eagerly looked for his advent, he chose out twelve men to be witnesses of his mighty works, the companions of his laborious path, the privileged intimates of his merciful bosom. Of these, Satan fixed on one, took up his abode in him, transformed him into his own image, and wrought in him to become the betrayer and murderer of his Master. The reading through any one of the four Gospels with a continual reference to the part that Satan was acting all along, will

give an awful idea of his indefatigable diligence.

We now come to Japheth; his posterity, reckoned among Gentiles, as having no part in the very peculiar advantages belonging to this branch of Shem, were received into participation of their rich privileges, and indeed into their place altogether, until the indignation against them should be accomplished. Grafted into the good olive, (Rom. xi. 17,) they became living branches: and though Satan might exult in the total ruin of Israel, the destruction of the holy city, and desolation of the goodly land, he had the mortification of seeing that Christ had yet a church, though Israel was not gathered; (Isaiah xlix. ;) and that his word would run and be glorified throughout the world; to the ends of the earth, and in the isles of the sea. He therefore set himself to defile and destroy the Gentile, even as he had done the Jewish Church: and two of his stale devices were found effectual here. By means of oral traditions, abundantly falsified, he set aside the Scriptures: and so having made the commandments of men more valid than the commands of God, he contrived by their means to bring in idolatry; not under its real title of idol-worship, or devil-worship, but on the principle of the golden calf, proclaiming a feast to Jehovah, while eating and drinking, dancing and rejoicing, in honour of the manufactured abomination of their own device. To such an extent did he succeed, that out of the whole mass of the Gentile Church, occupying the place of the Jew, and with pious horror trampling him under foot, only a very small, unknown, or where known, persecuted and butchered remnant, could be found, who did not far outdo the Jew in the worst of his iniquities.

But the Bible remained; and some were found to read it; and through the obstinate fidelity of the scorned, detested Jew, this new counterfeit of Christianity, with all hell at his heels, could not falsify the blessed text. By its means, the faith of God never extinguished, fully revived and spread abroad, and occasioned a great falling off from Popery to Christ. Here was a fresh call on the indefatigable diligence of Satan: he responded to it, by bringing in as many heresies, and by

effecting as many divisions, as he possibly could among those who held aloof from the idolatrous system; in the hope that he should yet be able so to arm it again with temporal power, as to crush the little flock of Christ within its gigantic jaws. In this position he now stands, working among the three branches of the human family, with the angry zeal of one, who knows that his time is very short. The descendants of Canaan he keeps in bondage of body and soul the most galling, the most degrading that man can submit to; and until within a short period, he had power even over a truly enlightened Christian nation, to make them active agents in perpetuating, yea, in aggravating the horrors of his yoke, on the necks of their sable brethren. Shem's principal representatives, the chosen, highly-favoured children of Jacob, are yet wholly blinded to the great truth which they have conveyed to us; and with the books of the Old Testament in their hands, and with the deepest reverence for all that Moses and the prophets have written concerning Christ, their eyes are withheld from recognising the substance of the shadow which they so cherish: and with the view of the water of life flowing across their path, they perish in unslaked thirst. The fiction with which Satan has long deceived so large a proportion of nominal Christendom, is still sustained; and up to this time he keeps his ground, in defiance of increasing light on all sides; so that we only now and then hear of an individual rescued from the dominion of that blasphemous cheat, and enabled to see the snare coiled around him; while full as many brought up in the doctrine and worship of the true God, turn aside unto fables and believe the lie. When we consider that of all these multitudes, and the myriads beside who have not been specified, every single individual requires the vigilant superintendence of some subtle spirit to continue his delusion, to harden him against the truth, and even against the pleadings of his own natural reason, and the surrounding evidences of a power, goodness, holiness, that he refuses to acknowledge, we may partly conceive what active duty is required of each several angel among the fallen host: and how prodigious must be the diligence of

their leader, ever seeing and directing such a complicated work.

In this instance alone, we have gone beyond the track of Scripture history; but not that of prophecy. The Bible sets forth what should come to pass; and we look at what has occurred, and what will yet occur, before our eyes. The prolonged bondage and wretchedness of Canaan's race, the unbelief, dispersion, and continued degradation of Israel, and the great apostacy from the Christian Church, with its duration and consequences, are all most exactly foretold. And Satan, as "the god of this world," "the prince of the power of the air," "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," is distinctly shown to be their governor, until, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, they are delivered out of his hand, and translated to the kingdom of God's dear Son.

SECTION VII.

SATANIC KNOWLEDGE.

There is a wisdom peculiar to the powers of evil whereof the apostle speaks: "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish;" James iii. 15; and there is a knowledge gained by close, continued observation, apart from any divine aid whatever, and which fits a man to deceive and defraud his neighbour. In this, we may believe Satan abounds; and we are quite sure that he has the power of communicating it, because the Scriptures distinctly say so. He can enable his servants to prophecy, but not true things: John saw an unclean spirit proceed out of the mouth of the false prophet. Rev. xvi. 13. He can endow them with miraculous powers; as witness Pharaoh's enchanters, and the predicted apostacy of him, "whose coming is after the workings of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders;" 2 Thess. ii. 9; and who, under another name, is described as he that "doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in

the sight of men; and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those wonders which he hath power to do in the sight of the beast." Rev. xiii. 13, 14. The heaven here spoken of, is, of course, the upper region of our atmosphere; for to the heaven of God's presence Satan cannot extend his influences; however, he may, by some mysterious mandate, be made to appear there, as we have already noticed. By devilish wisdom he may devise many crafty plans, and by devilish power carry them into most destructive operation; and it is important to consider this point, lest we fall into the very common snare of despising and neglecting what we are bound most vigilantly to watch and to guard against.

Men, by accurate observation of the phenomena of God's works, and tracing effects to their causes, sometimes make marvellous discoveries; and by a judicious application of the knowledge acquired, by analogical reasonings, fit combinations, and often by apparent accidents, occurring in the course of the curious investigations, they produce results that bear the character of amazing inventions. Yet how limited, how clouded, how defective, how utterly insignificant is the widest sphere of man's laborious observation, compared with what Satan can take in at a glance. The painful calculations of the astronomer, arrived at after years of sleepless nights, and requiring probably as many more studious days to render them intelligibly credible to others, are simple matters of common observation to him. Those hidden laboratories, where the elements in mystery and darkness work, are so far open to him as created intelligence is permitted to explore them; and he certainly knows our frame far better than we ourselves know it. We have the direct, explicit, reiterated testimony of God himself, that Satanic influence could quench the sight, close the hearing, fetter the tongue, paralyze the limbs, distort the body, madden the brain, and impart to man the force of a powerful, ferocious beast. Instances of all this have been adduced from Scripture, in the preceding sections; as also the marvels wrought, as in the case of the Egyptian sorcerers, probably by the application of Satanic skill, in what we call chemistry, natural

history, and other branches of science. We may doubt, or rather deny his ability to raise a tempest; for the stormy winds fulfil God's word: (Psalm cxlviii. 8;) but he can at least do more than Columbus did, when by calculating and foretelling an eclipse of the moon, he terrified the poor ignorant natives into compliance with all his demands.

An instance of his subtlety occurring a few years since, and attested by unimpeachable evidence, may illustrate this. The writer had it from one who was on the spot; and it has also been published. The late Lady Hester Stanhope, it is well known, fell into a snare of the devil, abjured her faith, and lived among the mountains of Djourni as an eastern princess, wholly divorced from all former ties, not only to her country, but to her God; she affected a knowledge of futurity, peculiar to those who practise witchcraft. Her house was visited by many strangers, including Englishmen; and they were hospitably entertained. At the time now alluded to, some zealous Christians occasionally took up their temporary abode with her; the Rev. Lewis Way, Joseph Wolff, and others, who earnestly longed to lead into the fold this wandering sheep and her infidel household. This, of course, would raise Satan's opposition in no common degree; for the smallest portion of good heaven lodged in that lump might work the ruin of his kingdom in a place where every inch of territory is an important possession. Among the members of her establishment was a Dewish, a pretender to superior knowledge and sanctity, a teacher and worshipper of false gods, therefore of devils; held in esteem by Lady Hester, and in great awe and admiration by her dependants. This man's influence could not co-exist with that of a Christian minister; and though it does not appear that he took any part in resisting them, Satan contrived so to establish his character as to seal up his followers in deeper darkness than before. A tremendous earthquake buried Aleppo in ruins: the city was overthrown and the inhabitants perished. Situated many miles distant from the scene of devastation, without the possibility of any human communication, and indeed before it took place, this Dewish openly proclaimed that Alep-

po was destroyed. In that advanced stage of the subterranean process, an observant being could doubtless tell that the crisis was at hand—could point the spot where, from circumstances ordered of God, it was evidently to burst: and thus by simply using the tongue of an ungodly man to convey the intimation, he established that man's claim to a prophetic spirit. It was much talked of at the time, and questioned by some who would neither admit that a divine revelation was made to so evil a character, and for no good end, or that Satan has power to discover the yet unrevealed purposes of God. We admit both these objections, yet the tale is true; and on this ground it is perfectly explicable.

And on this principle we may account for securing revelations of future, or very distant events, by dreams or otherwise, where they often tend to foster a dangerous superstition, or to strengthen belief in a false doctrine. Such things have come to pass within the knowledge of some who may read these pages. Intimations have been given of a death, or other occurrence, and mentioned also by the party receiving the impression, hours before it was possible for intelligence to arrive: sometimes at the very moment the circumstance took place; and instances could be named where Popery has at once been embraced on the strength of such juggling devices of Satan. A person apparently in the soundest health may be told by another, seemingly inspired, that within such a period he should die; and the prediction may be literally accomplished. In many cases, aneurism for instance, an organic disease works its way for a long time without producing any sensible external effect; but Satan marks, and calculates, and confidently pronounces what, when the event comes to pass, is regarded as an oracle of God. That He can and does graciously warn and instruct his servants, both "in dreams and visions of the night," and in various other ways, we cannot for a moment doubt; neither would we approach by a single step the awful crime of even ignorantly attributing to evil powers what may be the gracious intimations of the Holy One: we merely notice some illustrations of the Scripture assertion, that intercourse may be held with "fa-

miliar spirits," and witchcraft practised, and supernatural knowledge acquired by diabolical aid.

Three score years render a clever man shrewdly experienced and worldly wise, if he have passed them in carefully looking about him with a view to his own interests. What then must be the advantage to Satan of nearly six thousand years' observation of all that concerns our race? The stupendous intellect of an angel, faculties of which we can form no conception except from their mighty effects; enough of daring to brave, and enough of malignity to persecute "the Mighty Father, the Everlasting God, the Prince of Peace," and to aid all of these, an ally already engaged on his side within the bosom of every child of man. Such is our adversary the devil: such is that roaring lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour; and shall we be lulled into security, despite the awful admonitions which the Holy Ghost hath given, because it has become fashionable to despise his power, disbelieve his interference, and make light of his name?

But, apart from supernatural knowledge, there is a wisdom which Satan imparts, by means of those suggestions that every one among us can testify he has power to insinuate into our minds. The apostle was speaking of that external worldly religion which is consistent with "bitter envying and strife" in the heart. Where these are allowed, he bids us "glory not, and lie not against the truth," for the wisdom in which such persons boast themselves "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." Some have erringly compared the mind of an infant to a clean sheet of paper, on which good or bad may be written at will; this is wrong; for the paper is impure, and blotted from the very first, and scribbled over with all evil; but, so far as wisdom and knowledge are concerned, the sheet is certainly blank, until reason begins to unfold itself; and Satan is eagerly on the alert with his subordinate fiends, to impart that which cometh from beneath. It is a solemn consideration that every idea conveyed to a child's mind must be from one of these sources: man can originate nothing: he may imbibe the notions of others, but they too must be sought for under one of the

heads named by the apostle: the wisdom that cometh from above, which is pure and peaceable, or the wisdom that cometh from beneath, which is Satanic. Of the latter class was Ahithophel's wisdom; in a good cause, his plan of carrying on the war would have been sound counsel; but being brought to aid the cause of treason, rebellion, parricide, it was devilish. Satan suggested it, and God turned it into foolishness. 2 Sam. xvii. 14.

The wisdom taught by our adversary is always opposed to the truth; it is a knowledge that puffeth up, and makes those who possess it fools—"For my people is foolish, they have not known me: they are sottish children, they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge." Jer. iv. 22. And this must be unlearned: "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God;" for it is written, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness;" and again, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." 1 Cor. iii. 18, 19, 20. The Egyptians were fully replenished with this infernal wisdom, when planning to diminish the people of Israel by destroying the male children, they said, "Come on; let us deal wisely with them." Exod. i. 10. These, and similar passages, clearly showing that the wisdom of this world emanates from the god of this world, are calculated to prove to us the danger that besets the path of such as are bent on acquiring knowledge apart from godliness. They have a master at hand, ready and able to teach them as much as human understanding may grasp, and sure to clothe with every attraction the bait which he has found to be so efficacious in bringing souls into his net; but the price of his lessons is such, that the man who strikes that bargain is bankrupt forever.

SECTION VIII.

THE LIMIT OF SATANIC POWER.

WHENCE comes it that, in proportion as men are obviously under the influence of an unrenewed heart they seem disposed

to make light of the solemn reality which we are considering? Why do they most question or despise the enemy's power, when giving the plainest proofs of his unresisted dominion over themselves? Our Lord has furnished us with a clue to unravel the mystery: he says, in direct reference to it, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." Luke xi. 21, 22. Man is born in a state of rebellion against the supreme authority of his sovereign king; and likewise in such a condition of mental and spiritual darkness, that he cannot be brought to see himself as he is, until divinely illuminated. He cannot comprehend the plain meaning of assertions repeated again and again in the volume to which, as a whole, he perhaps yields his assent, but which, in its details and its personal applications, is probably still a sealed book to him. St. Paul describes man as being "carnal, sold under sin;" Rom. vii. 14; and again he says, "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. This characteristic of disobedience belongs to the whole human race, however reluctant they may be to acknowledge it. Indeed, the scheme of redemption necessarily hinges upon the fact, that man had offended God, and could not deliver himself. We also know in what way he was originally brought into this condemnation: "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners;" Rom. v. 19; and Satan is expressly set forth as the ruler of the *disobedient*, in that important passage which should never be out of our minds; "And you, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in times past, ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the *prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of DISOBEDIENCE*; among whom also we ALL had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of *wrath*, even as others." Eph. ii. 1-3. Here we have it laid down as an axiom that those who are in their natural

state of disobedience, those who still walk according to the course of this world, are under the dominion of Satan, possessed by him, since he works in them until the finger of God casts him out. When, therefore, we find men of unrenewed spirits making light of the power, and even hinting doubts of the existence of Satan, while they denounce as childish the declarations of others concerning him, who have felt within themselves that mighty conflict—the overcoming of the strong man, taking away the armour wherein he trusted and dividing the spoils, what does it prove but the necessity for increased earnestness on our part, in declaring the reality of what Satan, for his own sake, would represent as a fiction? So long as the natural man remains ignorant or incredulous of the fact that he is himself a palace of Satan, he will not throw open the door of his heart to the Deliverer who stands and knocks at it: so long as the believer can be induced to forget the strong testimony of God to the enemy's restless designs and efforts, he will leave the door so unguarded as to endanger the re-entrance of its former master, to the clean-swept and garnished habitation. Surely, then, it is a point of great moment with the enemy to lull our minds, and banish as far as he can our salutary dread of him; and hence what some, smarting from the bitter conflict, have recorded for the warning and encouragement of others, is stigmatized as weakness or insanity. Assuredly he who dared to face, to taunt, and to tempt the Lord Jehovah himself, deserves a higher rank than that assigned to him by such deceived commentators—the rank of a nursery hobgoblin!

Another very important fact bears upon the same point: Satan has no compulsory power over man. Let him do his utmost, he cannot compel any human being to transgress; he can only suggest, stimulate, provide occasion, and work in the children of disobedience to accomplish their own ruin. If we were helpless machines it would be different; but an act of volition on our part is necessary to constitute actual sin against God. Eve thought to cast the whole burden of guilt from herself upon the serpent; and if he had forced the fruit down her throat, contrary to her will, no doubt she would have stood

guiltless; but she was a consenting party, and so are we in every advantage that the devil obtains over us. Even the heathen Gentiles who never heard of a divine revelation, have a law written in their hearts; a conscience accusing or else excusing them; (Rom. ii. 15;) and among us who is there able to plead actual compulsion or anything beyond a temptation so strong perhaps as to appear irresistible, because he did not at the moment lay hold of the promise annexed to a precept that none ever followed in vain. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James iv. 7. It is our resistance that Satan dreads; he knows we can put him to flight if we detect and face him: therefore his step is noiseless, his movement stealthy, and his battery masked.

It is evident that our Lord's incarnation shook the kingdom of Satan upon earth in a peculiar manner; but without leaving the direct testimony of Scripture, and hazarding conjectures where the least error may lead to very dangerous results, we cannot say much on that subject. This we know, that the evil spirits expressed great terror at his approach, deprecating his interference, and crying out against the exercise of a power which they with one voice acknowledged. The seventy disciples, also, having been sent forth, returned again with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Luke x. 17—20. This certainly implies a great blow inflicted on the visible kingdom of Satan among men; but that its extent was limited by the area to which the Gospel spread, seems also clear from the case of the seven sons of Sceva, (Acts xix. 13—16,) who took upon themselves like some others, to exercise in the name of the Lord in whom they did not themselves believe. "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." To which the unclean spirit replied, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" and

instead of obeying the unauthorized command to come out of the man, he gave him strength to leap upon and overcome all the seven pretenders, so that they fled from the house, naked and wounded. But though we cannot define either the precise nature or extent of the curb laid down upon the enemy by the first advent of our Lord, it is certain that a great change took place shortly after in the manifestation of Satanic influences, which assumed more of a spiritual and less of a physical character, so that cases of obvious possession and witchcraft became less frequent, gradually disappearing before the advancing light of the Gospel. In our day they have apparently ceased, and with them, in a great measure, the belief in their having ever existed, while doubts that give the direct lie to the inspired Scriptures are started, listened to and canvassed with a grievous insensibility of the gross insult thus put upon the divine Author of that Book. Satan knows better than we do the extent of our power over him: the weakest believer is more than a match for him and all his angels, and would be able to prove it if brought to the test in the sight of men: therefore Satan lurks in ambush, forbearing to show himself openly as of old, lest he should draw forth the dormant energy of the Christian, inducing him to unsheath the sword that has slumbered in the scabbard until its master forgets that he holds such a weapon. The enemy indeed seems to be preparing for his last campaign against the church, by inducing such an oblivion of his history and features, that when he advances again she will not recognise him as the old serpent; while among the ungodly he prevails to have his existence so utterly disbelieved, and his name converted into a jest, that he may work in them to any extent. They will obey his worst impulses as the dictates of their own wisdom, and exhibit as honourable trophies of liberty and independence, the heaviest fetters that he can rivet on their enslaved minds.

We may then safely assert that a limit exists, beyond which the power of Satan and his crew cannot pass; and that it is known to us where that limit lies. Our blessed Lord disclosed it, when he said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath

desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee. *that thy faith fail not.*" Luke xxii. 31, 32. It is our faith that effectually baffles his strongest efforts, as St. Paul declares, "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Eph. vi. 16. And in a case of possession, where Jesus cast out a devil which his disciples had vainly tried to expel, when the latter asked the Lord, "Why could we not cast him out?" he answered, "Because of your unbelief." Matt. xvii. 19, 20. It is evident that man, being himself the lawful captive of Satan, and naturally inclined to follow his suggestions and to do his bidding, has nothing in himself calculated to oppose any effectual resistance to his power; and it is only as Christ, the conqueror of Satan dwells in him by faith, influencing his desires, and strengthening him with strength in the soul, that many may venture to face so terrible a foe. All other means of defence are utterly vain: Satan knows no fetter in his actings among men, but that which Christ has thrown upon him; and there is nothing so sure to drive the sinner to seek refuge in his Saviour, or to keep the believer close to him, as the clear comprehension of this momentous truth, that Satan, "going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it," meets no restraint but where he meets Christ enthroned in the heart of a ransomed sinner.

These hinderers of Satan's work of destruction, which he, "a murderer from the beginning," (John viii. 44,) is ever seeking to carry on and extend, are the people of God: they occupy through the reconciled blood of the cross, that position in the divine favour which man was originally created to enjoy, but which Satan persuaded him to forfeit. They are a little flock, gathered out from the immense community of the adversary's willing bondslaves, and from a kingdom as yet scarcely visible, scattered up and down, and divided, by his craft, into many portions. Of course, the usurper's object is two-fold: first, to strengthen his authority within his own domain, so as to place every obstacle in the way of the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom, by the accession of souls delivered from his

thralldom, and next to weaken the little band of his successful opponents; to lure them back, if it may be, into his chains; if not, to harass, to persecute, to destroy them from off the face of the earth. To accomplish these ends, to break down the prescribed limits of his range, he wields every means within his reach; his personal power and subtlety, the legions of fallen angels who acknowledge him as their chief, and the people of this world, "the children of disobedience," in whom he works, and in whom his work shows itself in an envious hatred of all that is good. If to dishonour God be, as we know it is, the end of Satan's designs; and if to make man the instrument of so dishonouring his Creator, be, as we know it is, his delight; how great must be his triumph, when he can involve the redeemed people of the Lord in such guilt, and turn, as it were, his prison bars into weapons of offence against his righteous captor. True, it may not again enclose the souls of the ransomed in his deadly grasp; but knowing the words of the Lord Jesus to his disciples, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit," (John xv. 8,) he strives to nip the tender blossoms, and to soil, if he cannot shake off, the half-ripened clusters of the true living branches. He contrives to mingle other motives with those which the Holy Spirit dictates; and if he cannot cause them to predominate, so that they who have begun in the spirit, and run well for awhile, are gradually drawn aside to follow the flesh, still he often weakens their hands by presenting to them, in a strong and alarming light, their defiled and imperfect service, and persuading them that God has forsaken them. This he did of old through his servants the false prophets, as the Lord speaks, "With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad." Ezek. xiii. 22. As he quoted Scripture to tempt the Lord Jesus, so he will do to harass his disciples. Has not the servant of God often found himself assailed in the act of teaching, exhorting, admonishing, whether with the lip or the pen, by some such passage as that, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?" Psalm l. 16, coupled with the recollection of past sins, which are washed away by

the blood of the Lamb, or the sense of present infirmity, which he knows he may carry to the throne of grace, where grace is promised, and help for every time of need, by him who hath made reconciliation for the sins of the people; and "for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Heb. ii. 18.

And he will, he does succour them. He has said, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you:" and has thereto added, "draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." James iv. 7, 8. Satan has great power, and he will stretch it to the uttermost in this branch of his work, tempting, harassing, discouraging, misleading the Lord's people: but there is a distinct promise given, that exhibits in a most cheering light the ever watchful care of the Most High over his poor children. "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also, make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. x. 13. Paul was not exempt from these fiery trials: we find him continually alluding to them in his epistles, and not unfrequently naming the source whence he knew that all proceeded. In authorizing the Corinthian Church to forgive and comfort the offending, but now penitent brethren, who had, by his command, been delivered over for a time to Satan for needful correction, he assigns as a reason for thus again receiving him, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices." 2 Cor. ii. 11. And in view of the dangers to which those devices constantly exposed them, he afterwards says, "I fear lest, by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ:" then he goes on to explain that it is by means of evil teachers the enemy is most likely to assail their faith, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ: and no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." 2 Cor. xi. 3, 13-15.

Then, being constrained by the injustice done to his character by these lying preachers, the apostle draws a picture of his sufferings, and the revelations vouchsafed to him, ending with the chastening dispensation, the "thorn in the flesh," with which Satan was permitted to afflict him permanently. The whole epistle to the Galatians, as it turns on the subject, of mischief wrought by these "false apostles," is an exposure of Satan's wiles, and a testimony of the grief and anxiety wherewith he perpetually disturbed the zealous Paul. In the beautiful epistle to the Ephesians, the apostle confirms all the doctrinal and practical instruction of the first five chapters, by that emphatic exhortation which cannot be too often recited—"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness (or wicked spirits) in high (or heavenly) places." Eph. vi. 10-12. He had comforted the Romans with the assurance that "neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers,"—and none but evil ones could attempt it,—"should be able to separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus;" Rom. viii. 38, 39; thus always bearing in mind the limit of Satanic power. To the Colossians he speaks with joy of having been delivered "from the power of darkness;" Col. i. 13; and with holy exultation of the work of Christ, in that "having spoiled principalities, and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it;" (ii. 15.) and warns them of the devices that may be practised to beguile them into the worshipping of angels, and other unchristian practices. He tells the Thessalonians, "We would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again, but Satan hindered us;" (1 Thes. ii. 18;) thus proving that even in designing a journey, the enemy met and thwarted him: and in the second epistle he sets forth, (chap. ii.) the particulars of that fearful apostacy from the faith which has been well described as "Satan's masterpiece," the rise, progress, and final destruction of the Papal Anti-

christ. The same apostacy is again foretold to Timothy. 1. Tim. iv. 1—3. The apostle also laments that Satan has already drawn some women aside after him, through idleness and tattling, chap. v. 13—15, and urges Timothy to seek the recovery of such as still remain in the snare of the devil, 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26, and after recapitulating the evil wrought against him by those whom the enemy had stirred up, among professed followers, he concludes with a triumphant assurance of his approaching final victory and rest. The more we refer to those early days of the Christian dispensation, the better shall we be armed against what now is, and prepared for what is to come. It is indeed impossible exactly to measure the full extent of Satanic power; but this we know, be it of whatever magnitude, the Lord hath set it bounds which it cannot pass: our most holy faith is the great appointed bearer; and in proportion as we diligently build ourselves up on that, we shall be safe.

SECTION IX.

SATANIC WRATH, AS THE END DRAWS NIGH.

HITHERTO, our principal concern has been with the history of the past: we now enter upon the no less certain history of the future. To suppose that God has vouchsafed to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass, yet has shown them in such a way as to darken and perplex the honest inquirer, is to do Him great wrong. No, the word spoken is, "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tablets, that he may run that readeth it; for the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Hab. ii. 2, 3.

In various parts of Scripture, but more particularly in the discourses of our Lord, shortly before his crucifixion, we are apprized of a period immediately preceding the commencement of Christ's glorious reign upon earth, when tribulation such as the world has never yet seen shall prevail,

if not universally, at least in those parts of the earth to which the general word of prophecy refers. Daniel thus speaks of it; or rather, the celestial Being who came to instruct Daniel: "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time." Dan. xii. 1. This is mentioned as taking place at the time of the destruction of what we have every reason to believe is the Turkish empire; and synchronizing with the duration of that empire, is the period of 1260 days mentioned in Rev. xii. 6, at the end of which we are told, "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels." The whole passage has already been given, (page 365;) and the concluding words are terribly impressive, "Rejoice ye heavens, and them that dwell in them. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time," (verse 12.) The tribulation then, which excites the exclamation of "wo!" from the heavenly voice, is the work of Satan, permitted to plunge the world into one great final trouble; overruled for the purification of God's children, and the destruction of his enemies. In the message to the church of Philadelphia, which has endured to this day, the same period is probably referred to. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. iii. 10. Such being the declared purpose of God, and Satan being the immediate inflicter of the terrible chastisement, let us, with awe, reverence, and godly fear, yet confident in Him through whom we shall be enabled to escape every snare, and to be "more than conquerors," approach this subject; convinced that whatever he has caused to be written, was written for our learning.

We are told by our Lord that "wars and rumors of wars, distress of nations and perplexity," shall usher in these fearful times. War is an element that Satan must exceedingly delight in; for it often

cuts off in their sins more souls in a day than by natural death he can hope to grasp in many years. It fosters every bad passion; its origin is in the lusts that war in our members, desiring things that in God's providence are withheld from us, and wading to them through the blood of our brethren. A hateful, an accursed thing it is; wholly irreconcilable with the gospel, or with any one precept of the gospel; yet Satan prevails to make "wars and fightings" not only a branch of their policy, but even a matter of boasting among nations professedly Christian. One of his first achievements in this closing convulsion, will be to put the nations in battle array, one against another, and all against God. Earthquakes, famines, pestilences, fearful sights, and supernatural signs, domestic treachery, and public hostility, are all enumerated as concurrent evidences of the time when the three "spirits of devils," (Rev. xvi. 13.) shall have entered upon their infernal mission. It were easy to speculate as to the precise nature of their operations, and the particulars of the tremendous battle-field into which they will bring the deceived hosts; but the subject is too solemn for such guess-work; it better becomes us to receive with reverent thankfulness the intimations actually given, and to wait patiently the appointed time for making manifest what the Lord hath decreed. The "fearful sights" which are spoken of in such connexion as to make it plain they will be of a supernatural character, are here represented as the performance of miracle-working devils. The great Antichrist, Popery, is described as him "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and all deceiveableness of unrighteousness;" (2 Thess. ii. 9;) and though, in a measure, this has been characteristic of the Papacy from its first rise, still we are led to expect a very great accession of devilish power at that time, when the Lord is approaching to destroy the Deceiver with the brightness of His coming. There is, so to speak, an antagonist "coming" of Popery described when the Lord himself comes to judge and to reign: when the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, each contribute a missionary devil, invested with extraordinary powers,

to tempt the kings and nations of the earth to battle against the Lord God Almighty. Great indeed must be the liberty given to the evil One when thus far he will prevail; and that he lacks only liberty to accomplish it is clear enough. When leave was granted him to afflict Job, we have seen how his herds, flocks, servants, houses, children, and health passed away, as it were, in a moment; "like a rolling thing before the whirlwind." Let Satan therefore, receive a temporary power to convulse our globe, and what fearful "earthquakes" will ensue? Let the ripening harvest be delivered up to his disposal, and "famine" will stalk abroad in forms never before witnessed; while the "pestilence" in his fierce, malignant hand, will transform the healthiest population into heaps of loathsome corruption.

God can arm his spiritual creatures with a terrible power over mortal life. The destroying angel who smote the Egyptians, is an instance of the rapid movement with which a multitude may be mown down; and it is remarkable also in being not a promiscuous slaughter, like that of Sennacherib's army, but a careful selection made from every family in every house. An angel, too, smote the people of Israel when David had numbered them, the description of whose proceedings is awfully grand. 1 Sam. xxiv. 26. And in the next verse we are told, "David saw the angel that smote the people;" therefore to resolve it, as some attempt to do, into a figurative mode of expression, is unwarrantable: it was a real angel of God; and even such was Satan before he fell; and what a holy angel can do by a divine command, that can the foul apostate also do by divine permission.

But a far more perilous feature of these predicted times of trial, is the seduction to be practised. Satan understands the varieties of the human character; he knows there are many whom open persecution would rouse rather than intimidate, and for them, and for God's true people, he has snares in reserve. He can make his own murderous acts appear as the righteous judgment of the Most High. In the Revelation we are told, that the Papal beast "doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men," Rev.

xiii. 13; and that he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by means of those miracles which he hath power to do. We may naturally conclude, that his object is to assume divine authority for what he does, by bringing the destructive element down, as when the Lord rained fire and brimstone upon the cities of the plain; for even so he wrought to terrify Job, while he stripped him of his possessions.

Domestic treachery, arming kindred hands, is also predicted—Luke xxiv. 16; so that a man's foes shall be "they of his own household." This is a very ancient device of Satan: he first rendered Eve the deadliest foe of her husband and of her whole posterity, by leading her to transgress: he then guided the hand of the first man born into the world to slay his brother: and history, sacred and profane, is but a record of his successful plots against the peace of families and of kingdoms, by means of every species of treachery. Here, us of old, he will make his delusions avail to draw the deluded into all cruelty and bloodshed. His terrible craft is able to persuade a man that falsehood is truth, and that in slaying the righteous, "he doeth God service;" hence the snare against which the Lord most fully and emphatically warned his first disciples, and against which he also warns us—false Christs, and false prophets. We know that just previous to the destruction of Jerusalem, when, no doubt, Satan hoped to involve the Christians in the general ruin, several deceivers assumed the name of Christ, and drew away many after them: it is plain that in some way, these pretensions will again be but forth; and we have reason to look steadily at that which is already written, lest any seeming revelation, contradictory to what is given to be our guide unto the end of the world, should be contrived, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. The general expectation, prevailing more and more throughout the church, of our Lord's promised coming, will doubtless furnish the cunning adversary with additional means of annoyance and destruction. Already, and for centuries past, has he proclaimed, "Behold! he is in the secret chambers!" to the eternal loss of unnumbered souls who, believing the lie, have worshipped an idol

enclosed in a box, upon the Popish altars; deifying the senseless paste in Christ's stead, and perishing in their sin. Literally and distinctly is a "false Christ" held forth for public worship, by the "false prophets" of Rome, to this day; and no one is justified in questioning the express fulfilment, to the letter, of all that our Lord has foreshown. Here, too, there is warrant enough in the Old Testament to satisfy the most incredulous. When the king of Israel was to be enticed to battle at Ramoth Gilead, where he fell, a "lying spirit" possessed the whole company of his prophets, so that they all predicted his success, in the name of the Lord. He, "who was a liar from the beginning," put into their mouths this unauthorized prediction; even as he tempted the old prophet of Bethel to deceive the man of God who came out of Judah: and in like manner the Jewish people were continually transgressing through the perfidious words of their ungodly teachers, saying, "Peace, peace," where there was no peace. There seems to be a prevailing belief among Christians, that the enmity of the last day will break forth in the form of open, outrageous infidel defiance of God and his Christ; and so it probably will to a great extent: but surely not exclusively so: Satan will not wholly give up his old craft of forging God's name and authority for deeds most desperately subversive of His laws and insulting to His majesty. "That old serpent" retains the designation, and no doubt, the deep, subtle plausibility which it implies, to the very moment when an elect angel lays hold on him, and binds him, and shuts and seals him up, "that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Rev. xx. 3. And again, "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth," (verses 7, 8.) Such considerations would render us more watchful against forms of error, creeping with serpent-like guile into the Church itself, and stealing on the unguarded points of the citadel, where, as no open enemy is descried, no adequate defence is prepared.

The extraordinary movement that, some ten or twelve years since excited univer-

sal attention, when the Scotch Church in London was considered to be the scene of miraculous manifestations of divine power, wore very much the aspect of a preparatory manœuvre of the enemy. Some things took place that it is very hard to account for, without admitting the aid of a supernatural power; and to suppose that power to have been of God is impossible, when we remember with what an awful heresy it was connected. That party set up indeed a "false Christ"—a Christ compounded of Popish and Socinian errors, a blasphemous counterfeit of him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. The manner of bringing in this perilous deceit, was exceedingly like what the Scripture leads us to expect of Satan's latter-day devices; and it is remarkable, that just as the Lord placed an evident barrier to stay the farther spread of this delusion, another masked battery against the truth of Christ's gospel, subversive, at once, of His atoning and His mediatorial all-sufficiency, was opened at Oxford, and has worked, and is working to the same end with the Irvingite heresy, only with a different kind of assumption. In the former attempt, the gospel was to be set aside by a new revelation, accompanied with attesting signs and wonders, as from the hand of its Almighty Author: under the latter system, men claim a power, in virtue of the commission delivered to the apostles, of new modelling all things: thinking to "change times and laws," (Dan. vii. 25,) after the manner, and on the same ground as the Papacy, that convicted child of the devil: and into which the whole thing will probably soon resolve itself, in the face of all men. These small droppings are at once a portent and a sample of the coming shower; and we shall do well so to regard them, and to take timely shelter under the shadow of the immovable rock.

The distinguishing mark of Satan's false Christs is, that they are only half Saviours; man is, in some way, to make up the deficiency: and so, seeking to be justified by the law, he falls from grace—Gal. v. 4. Satan well knows how sure is that word, which received its primary accomplishment on the day of Pentecost. "It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall

be delivered"—Joel ii. 32; and when the final "great and terrible day" shall draw near, he will put forth all his subtlety to deceive men, that they may call on some name which can afford no deliverance, like Baal's priests; or, as did the sons of Sceva, call unbelievably on Him who is nigh to help only when the prayer is breathed from the lip of faith.

Nor is his craft in this matter confined to the exhibition of something manifestly different from the truth: there is a way of preaching even the pure doctrines of the Bible, that will in a great measure neutralize their effects. The apostle could declare, "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord;" and so they did, as we may perceive from the recorded sermons of these first inspired teachers, in the book of Acts: the sum and substance of their discourse was, "Flee from the wrath to come." They showed the terrors of that wrath, and they held forth Jesus Christ as the only refuge from it; as they told of his death and resurrection, his power in heaven and in earth, and the certainty of his coming to judge and to reign. "Be it known to you," was their proclamation to the Jews, "that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii. 38, 39. To the Gentiles they declared, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins;" (Acts x. 43;) and this mode of preaching is according to the mind of God: He owns it, and blesses it; and by its simplicity, which in the wisdom of this world is called "foolishness," he saves them that believe. 1 Cor. i. 21. There is nothing Satan dreads more than a ministry of this stamp; accordingly he draws men away from the homely backward path, fills them with notions of their own sufficiency, persuades them that originality is a great gift, much to be coveted, and that intellect is the right door to men's souls. He points out here a Paul, there an Apollos, and in another pulpit a Cephas: whose respective hearers presently discover, each that his own minister is the very model of all that a minister ought to be, and his style of preaching

precisely what is most needed. Hence we hear whispers among the separating congregations, not of conscience-stricken sorrow for sin, not of awakened praise for salvation, not of deep desire for the continued presence of him who has been (or ought to have been) visibly set forth crucified among them; but "What a splendid discourse! How great Mr. ——— was to day! What eloquence, what imagery, what clear views he takes! Certainly our pastor has no equal among his brethren." Hence that system of sermon-hunting, which as Cecil well remarked, is little better than fox-hunting; hence the Sabbath desecration, the carriage called out to hear its owner to some favourite place of worship; the horses robbed of their assigned season of repose, the attendant domestics either excluded from, or cruelly curtailed in their share of religious ordinances; and so, too often, carnality is insensibly substituted for spirituality.

This ought not to be: an adversary hath done it, and the same adversary well knows what immense advantage he must gain by the system, when he succeeds in drawing one of these popular men aside from the straight path. Many of those who think they only follow the teacher, because he follows Christ, will be betrayed into still following him, when he has turned his back upon the Lord. Satan first infected man with his own diabolical disease—pride; and the whole turn of the gospel of Christ is to provide an antidote for that venom. And first, the preaching of the cross is a cross to the preacher, if he do it aright; for he must be content to forego much of what is highly esteemed among men, and to be nothing that Christ may be all. Line upon line, line upon line; precept upon precept, precept upon precept; the wearisome repetition of that one story, "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" that one warning, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him:" that one direction, "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out:" such a mode of dealing with a world dead in trespasses and sins, will never give the preacher undue pre-eminence among men, but it will glorify his master, and save souls.

Where now shall we go for this heaven-inspired strain? Many such ministers there doubtless are whose rule of teaching is "Christ exalted, and self-abased;" but we may more readily find the thing which Satan fears in the pages of John Bunyan, or John Flavel, than from the lips of eloquent pastors in our own day. If Paul should come to hold a visitation of what we have reason to believe was once a part of his own wide diocese, surely he would be constrained to put the searching question, "Are ye not carnal?"

We are now writing of Satanic wrath as his permitted day shortens, and his wrath does not always vent itself in explosions of rage. It works sometimes in secrecy and darkness; fierce, indeed, and cruel always but never devoid of skillful cunning to direct it. There is as much of his wrath in the speaking of smooth things, and the prophesying of peace to those with whom the Lord has a controversy, as in the greatest tumult of violence. Who shall tell the extent of that wrathful hatred against God and his fair creation, which prompted the bland insinuating lie, "Ye shall not surely die." Oh that ministers and congregations would bear in mind, equally bear in mind how great a stake the enemy has in drawing away their minds from the unadorned simplicity that is in the doctrines of the cross.

But the doctrine of the crown is another which he now struggles with all his infernal might to suppress. A crucified Saviour, an atoning sacrifice, a mediating High Priest in heaven, he loathes to think on, or to suffer his bond-slaves to hear of; but a reigning king, about to rescue the earth from all his usurpations, to plant his throne in righteousness in the midst of his people, to send forth his word from Zion, and his law from Jerusalem. This is the very knell of Satan's departure; and to stifle the sound he will foster humility itself, or any grace by the perversion of which he may hope to seal the preacher's lips on that fearful topic. For eighteen centuries he has heard the petition resounding on all sides, "Thy kingdom come;" and he cares not how often it is reiterated, (as witness the Papacy with its everlasting repetition of Pater-nosters,) so long as men do not inquire into the nature of that

coming kingdom, or watch for its approach. An imperfect Gospel he can tolerate, and in our day that is an imperfect Gospel which omits the great truth of a speedy manifestation of the Lord from heaven. The sound of his conqueror's chariot wheels is a fearful sound to Satan; and knowing that nothing will so surely turn the attention of the Church upon himself as the heralding of Christ's approach, he will strike almost any bargain, of which a condition is the silencing of that ominous voice.

In connexion with this part of the subject, we may call to mind the parable of our Lord, where he describes the proceedings of the unclean spirit, who has left for a time his habitation, as distinguished from that effectual expulsion which God only can accomplish. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house, whence I came out: and when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits, more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Luke xi. 24—26. We may be assured that attempts at such re-entrance, under aggravated forms, into every person who may appear to have been delivered from the power of Satan, will be made as the time shortens, and the enemy's rage increases; and hence the cruel treachery that Christ's people must look for at the hands of their nearest connexions and dearest companions. Many an Ahithopel will be found; many a Judas to revolt from his friend, and to betray his master; and many an unsuspecting Christian will have to take up the prophetic complaint, "It was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." Psalm lv. 13, 14.

It is of the first importance that we should be prepared not only for an outburst of Satanic malignity and cruelty, such as was never before permitted to devastate our world, but also for a manifestation of Satanic potency, such as men are fast losing all belief in. We do not give the enemy credit for possessing such powers as the word of God distinctly ascribes

to him; we are apt to fancy that the blow miraculously inflicted on him during the early years of the New Testament church, has crippled him forever; and we therefore look for nothing more, in the things that are coming on the earth, than a peculiar readiness on the part of bad men, to act upon his cunning suggestions. The consequence of this unguarded state of mind will be, that when leaders appear, assuming new ground, and confirming their assumptions by doing real marvels in our sight, we shall be tempted to receive them as Simon Magus was received of old by the people whom he bewitched with his sorceries: "To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God." Acts viii. 10. Not a few of those who held out against the Irvingite heresy in the days of its success, did so, as they acknowledged, only because its apostles failed in performing any really miraculous work. Attempts were made to raise up the dying, and to revive the dead; and their open failure cooled the zeal of some very anxious inquirers: should a similar delusion be brought forward, and such things actually effected, are we prepared to resist the evidence of sense, and to cling to the word of God alone? We shall be better armed for such a trial, by giving serious heed to what the Bible testifies in the passages here cited, and receiving the predictions in their simple, literal acceptance.

Popery is now heaping up its stately piles of architecture throughout the land, fitted, no doubt, in their secret recesses, with a vast machinery for the exhibition of "lying wonders" on a grand scale, by which many will be snared and taken; but though a principal, still Popery is not likely to be the sole manifestation of Satan in these coming horrors. Forms of error less openly revolting than the gross idolatry of that system, but not less fatal to the soul if persisted in, will be supplied, for those who would hurl the anathema at an angel from heaven, if he dared to preach up the mass. Some will be led astray, but not finally; for it is plainly said, "Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end." Dan. xi. 35. And to this the apos-

tle seems to refer, where he says of the sins and judgments of Israel, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. x. 11, 12. No vain speculation should mix itself up with this solemn subject: It is one where each believer must seek instruction how to arm himself for the great battle, in which he may expect ere long to be engaged: the word of God alone, prayerfully studied and practically applied, will show to each of us the might, the wrath, and the purpose of our adversary. It will also show us how that adversary is to be met and conquered; even by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony.

SECTION X.

THE DOOM OF SATAN AND HIS ANGELS.

IN the sentence pronounced upon the serpent, it was declared that the seed of the woman should bruise his head. A blow inflicted on the vital part indicates final destruction; and in accordance with this, the apostle tells us that our Lord Jesus became partaker of flesh and blood, "that through death he might DESTROY him that had the power of death, that is the devil." Heb. ii. 14. We find the great enemy, first an angel, not keeping his holy estate, but becoming rebellious, transformed into a liar and a murderer, composing the ruin of this beautiful creation, and drawing a creature, made in the image of God, into deadly transgression against his merciful and glorious Maker. Still having occasional access to heavenly places, we find him availing himself of it to accuse before God those whom he had tempted into sin, and to resist the work of mercy towards man. Then, cast wholly out of heaven, we learn that he vents his great wrath upon the inhabitants of earth, and for a limited time plunges them in fearful woes. Lastly, the doom for which he knows himself to be reserved is in-

flicted; and he, with all his legions of accursed spirits, are cast into a pit of sulphurous flames, there to abide forever and ever.

The intimations given of this final judgment are many and explicit. Jude, with whose words we commenced our proofs, in those words declared the end: "The angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6. They are, themselves, perfectly well aware of what is coming upon them; as St. James implies when speaking of a faith that works not by love, an acknowledgment of God's being, power, and justice, without any sense of redeeming mercy, any conformity to his will. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble." James ii. 29. They made the same admission themselves, when terrified by the sudden appearance of their dreaded Judge. The "legion" saw him coming:—"And behold they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Matt. viii. 29. And again the unclean spirit in the synagogue, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." Mark i. 24. On another occasion one of the devils "besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country;" (Mark v. 10;) or as St. Luke expresses it, "They besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep;" (Luke viii. 31;) by which must be understood the bottomless pit; since, on having their request granted, they immediately entered the swine, and of their own accord, rushed down into the sea.

Our Lord has foreshown their dreadful doom; in which all who remain under the dominion of Satan, must likewise partake: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. xxv. The constant contemplation of this their certain end, must greatly aggravate the malignity of evil spirits: nothing is so hardening as despair. Their sin was unpardonable; and Christ "took not on him the nature of

angels," (Heb. ii. 16,) to work out for them the redemption which in his infinite compassion he vouchsafed to achieve for their wretched victim, man. There could be none to tempt Satan into rebellion as he tempted Eve to disobedience; and how irritating must it be to a mighty, spiritual, angelic being, to see a creature formed out of the dust, redeemed from his power at so vast a price as the blood of the incarnate God, while he, and the myriads of his companion spirits are passed by—left to perish forever! We see with what horrible rage and cruelty he used the power, for a short time committed to him, that the innocent Jesus might suffer. Most signally was he baffled! he came against Christ to tempt and seduce, and was repelled, put to shame, and, driven away: he came against him to smite and kill, and in so doing was himself destroyed; his usurped empire wrested from him, the prey for which he had so long toiled taken out of his net, and the mortal bruise inflicted on his accursed head. Our blessed Lord, in the immediate prospect of his sufferings, said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." John xii. 31. The result was certain, the triumph secured. He had before, in the rich success of the first Gospel missionaries, beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven: (Luke x. 18:) now, in the contemplation of his own death, "the travail of his soul," he saw him cast out from his last refuge on earth, and about to sink into the lake of fire.

The order of events, as regards this final casting out, is very distinctly set forth. We have already seen the predictions of that short period of great wrath, when Satan and his attendant devils shall try the world with unprecedented calamities, and gather its kings and captains to battle against the King of kings and Lord of lords. At this point vengeance first overtakes him: his chosen instrument, the beast, and the false prophets that wrought miracles before him, are taken, and cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone: (Rev. xix. 20:) and then follows the event to which the Church looks forward with such longing desire: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand: and he laid hold

on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that, he must be loosed a little season." Rev. xx. 1—3. This chaining and imprisoning of Satan during a thousand years, whether they be literal years, or prophetic years of days, and every day a year, is most mercifully not revealed to us, as the most encouraging support under the trials that precede it. Christ will then have taken to him his great power, and will reign, not as a preached but as a present Saviour and King. No longer shall the perfidious enemy snatch away the seed of divine truth from the human heart, as now he does: (Matt. xiii. 19:) no longer shall he prevail to sow his worthless tares among the true wheat of the Church; (verse 39;) his hateful presence will no longer vex, nor his malignant power oppress the world. Violence shall cease: "They shall not hurt nor destroy, in all my holy mountain;" (Isaiah xi. 11;) ignorance, superstition, and unbelief shall vanish: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

The creatures of Jehovah shall no longer be beguiled into tempting and dishonouring their Creator, by following after false gods, or setting up stumbling-blocks of rebellious iniquity in their hearts, for "The Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day, there shall be one Lord, and his name One." Zech. xiv. 9. It is impossible to conceive the amount of happiness to be derived from the mere absence of Satan, even were no positive blessing to accompany the negative good: but since his capture and committal will be the result of His coming again into the kingdom whose right it is, we may well be glad, and rejoice in the prospect, and comfort one another with these words.

This, however, is not a final casting out of our restless enemy: sufficient evil will yet lurk in some parts of the renewed earth for him to practise his old craft upon; and he will have liberty so to do. "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in

the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle." Rev. xx. 7, 8. Who these nations are, or under what circumstances they will at that period be placed, we cannot possibly say. It is idle, and worse than idle, for men to guess, to predicate, to dogmatize, on matters where the most learned has no other *data* to guide him, than is vouchsafed to any babe in a Sunday school. We know that the Lord hath spoken it; therefore we know that it shall come to pass. Satan's prison door shall be opened, his chain removed, and immediately he will return to his ancient work of deceiving men. It is appalling to observe with what fierce earnestness he is bent on this detestable employment. His hatred of man is ever breaking out; and what must they expect to endure, who, through their rejection of Christ's Gospel, doom themselves to be his companions and slaves for ever! Hell, as a place of flames and torments, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," is invested with mystery that shrouds its terrors, and leads bold unbelievers to scoff at what they cannot comprehend; but hell, as manifested in the character and actings of Satan, is a comprehensible and a fearful reality! To be condemned, even for a short time, to the exclusive society, and subjected to the despotic will of a person who utterly hates us, and by all means seeks our hurt, is an infliction that few would like to brave: but this is a helpless bondage forever and ever, to and with one who, as a powerful angel, must always be stronger than we; and whose torments, while we partook of them, would perpetually incite him to tenfold ferocity against us, as a means of their great aggravation.

Satan will succeed in his last expedition, so far as the deceiving, and consequent destroying of these nations is concerned; whose number, we are told, is as the sands of the sea. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God, out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Rev. xx. 9, 10.

Beyond this the word of God does not lead us: the secrets of that burning pit are not revealed to man. The terribleness of divine wrath, in its unmitigated inflictions, no heart can conceive, neither may tongue essay to describe it. Some have spoken of the state of the lost, as though it was one where rage and blasphemy continually poured forth their despairing defiance of the Most High. It may be so, as regards the evil spirits, but Scripture leads to no such supposition respecting the ruined souls of men. Anguish most bitter, weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth: a full appreciation of what has been rejected, and an agonizing consciousness of what is incurred—the total absence of hope, the blackness of darkness, to be known and felt forever and ever—these are a part of what we are told will be the portion of those who believe not: the doom of such as will not obey. Let this awful glimpse of unspeakable and everlasting woe suffice; and may the blood of Him who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot for sins, be so applied to the soul of her who writes, and of every individual who reads these pages, that they may never know, by experience, the terrific reality of what, by faith, they are assured, is reserved for the enemies of the Gospel of Christ.

PART II.

OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

SECTION I.

THEIR EXISTENCE AND CHARACTER.

In the great conflicts that man has to wage with the terrible enemy to whom he has sold himself, and who labours to keep, or to regain possession of every individual soul, so long as it inhabits the body, man has but one effectual help. Unaided and alone, God, manifest in the flesh, fought the battle of redemption: he alone paid the ransom, and from him alone is all strength, all succour to be derived. There

is not in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, any created thing, capable of supplying a fraction towards the mighty price of man's deliverance, nor of contributing an iota of the power by which alone he can successfully fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. It is highly important to bear this in mind, because of the fearful abuses by which the adversary has prevailed to pervert the delightful truths that we are now about to investigate. The Pupal apostacy, one of whose characteristics it is to "blaspheme them that dwell in heaven," (Rev. xiii. 6,) has established a system of angel-worship, interwoven with every part of its unholy fabric, and carried to such an excess that it has prevailed to drive the Church of Christ into an opposite extreme; teaching them to shrink from, or to overlook the encouraging truths that tend to the glory of God; and which are therefore changed into a lie by Satan, that in our anxiety to shun that lie, we may lose the consolations provided for us.

Of what subsisted previously to the creation of this globe, we have but very dim intimations; yet we know that angelic hosts looked on and rejoiced in the beautiful work. This is conveyed in magnificent language in the book of Job, where the Lord enters into controversy with the doubting and complaining, but self-justifying sufferer. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Job xxxviii. 4-7. It is certain from this passage, that beings, bright and holy, existed, with faculties to comprehend, and minds to rejoice in the manifestation of God's power and goodness in creating this globe on which we dwell. They are called "the angels of God," Gen. xxviii. 12, "Holy angels," Matt. xx. 31.

Michael seems, indeed, to be among the holy angels, what Satan is among the fallen spirits, a leader invested with great power: and we find them personally opposed on two occasions,—the first of which

seems conclusive as to his being, however high and glorious, still a creature, humble and obedient: "Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, *durst* not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee." Jude 9. Peter applies the same argument, and seemingly alludes to the same event, when treating, as Jude does, of the presumptuous evil-speaking of ungodly men. "They are not afraid to speak of evil dignities: whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not a railing accusation against them before the Lord." 2 Peter ii. 11. Here the same expressions are applied to Michael, and to angels generally. He is, however, of exalted rank, as the angel who talked with Daniel plainly declared, when alluding to the mysterious contest in which he had been engaged, together with other spiritual beings, and which has already been quoted. Michael is there designated "One of the chief princes;" and the angel addressing Daniel as a seer, calls him "Michael your prince." Dan. x. 13-21. Finally, when describing the consummation of all things, the angel says, "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people." Dan. xii. 1. From all this we gather that Michael is one among several angelic beings, whom the Lord has seen fit to elevate above their fellows, and that as regards the concerns of our planet, he is probably the chief. The word archangel occurs but once more in the Bible, and there we are told, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. iv. 16. But Michael is named again, as we have before seen, as heading the great battle against Satan, when "there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels." Rev. xii 7.

The most natural inference to be drawn from what the Lord has seen good to intimate to us, is that some special post is assigned to each one of the heavenly spirits; and collectively we know what their office is. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14. One

may, indeed, oversee the affairs of the kingdom, while another watches the slumbering baby in a cottage cradle, but be the office what it may, it is rendered arduous by the incessant opposition of the Satanic hosts, who are forever crossing the path and thwarting the work of those ministering spirits, to say nothing of the perverseness of those who, though by the free mercy of God they are "heirs of salvation," still inhabit a body of death, tainted by corruption, opposed to holiness, and presenting, no doubt, a painful and a perplexing spectacle in the eyes of their unseen friends, whose holy natures, full of love, zeal, thankfulness, and perfect obedience, must often shrink from the perverse iniquity of even the redeemed people of God.

Yet we know that these loving ministers take delight in our prosperity: their zeal for the glory of God must necessarily cause them to rejoice in the subversion of Satan's empire among men; and the knowledge that they possess of his object, the continual sight of his atrocious devices to promote that cruel object, and above all, the daily, hourly spectacle of souls passing from this stage of existence into a hopeless eternity, all tend to keep alive in their minds that compassionate feeling towards us which makes the welfare of every soul a matter of deep interest to him. Our Lord assures us that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth;" (Luke xv. 10;) and there is no mistaking the affectionate tone of the angelic messenger who, with the glory of the Lord encircling him, greeted the shepherds, "Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people;" (Luke ii. 10;) nor that of the various angels who announced the Lord's resurrection to the women; "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold he goeth before you into Galilee; and there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you." Matt. xxviii. 5—7. This is an exquisite picture of angelic power, glory, and tenderness combined. The angel who spoke was seated on the stone that

he had rolled from the sepulchre's mouth: such was the dazzling splendour of his countenance, that it shone like lightning; and the armed soldiers of Rome "did shake and became as dead men." Yet how kindly, with what condescending indulgence, and mild assurance he encourages the poor terrified women, dilating upon the particulars that were best calculated to inspire them with confidence and joy! We may return hereafter to the subject; but at present it must not be overlooked as exhibiting in a most touching light, the angelic character.

The first notice we have in Scripture of the ministry of angels is an awful one. God "placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Gen. iii. 24. No doubt they who had sung together and shouted for joy when earth arose beneath the hand of her divine framer, and the whole glorious fabric was completed and pronounced very good, were frequent visitors to man, encouraging and sharing with him the language of praise to their King; and very terrible indeed to them must have been the spectacle of these favoured, beloved creatures, recently formed out of the dust, and exalted to such majesty, and endowed with such felicity, drawn aside by a device of the devil to revolt, and to bring a curse upon what God had blessed; and their service in guarding the gate from the expelled offenders was a willing one; for how could the Lord be insulted and they not moved to most indignant sorrow? But although we find them prompt to execute the terrible denunciations of his displeasure, his mercy to man excites their chief joy. We shall find many proofs of this as we go on; and while repudiating with horror the least approach to rendering them a particle of the honour due to God alone, we must be cold indeed not to feel a glow of thankful affection towards the high and sinless beings who sympathise with us in this our low estate of guilt and sorrow, who encamp around us to watch the movements of our deadly foes, and who long to welcome us into the heavenly mansions of safety and peace prepared for us by their Lord and ours.

SECTION II.

ANGELIC KNOWLEDGE AND POWER.

OMNISCIENCE belongs to God alone: He only is the Hearer of prayer, the Searcher of hearts, the sovereign Ruler of the affairs of man. To suppose that any created being may appropriate even the minutest portion of these high prerogatives of Jehovah, is nothing short of heresy, verging on blasphemy. Its dangerous tendency is plainly shown by the apostle, who says that the worshipping of angels beguiles the Christian of his reward. Col. ii. 15. Therefore we have need to be very sober and circumspect, lest in treating of this most interesting subject, we be led, through inadvertence, into ascribing to the holy angels any properties on which the ignorant and profane might ground an excuse for rendering to them divine honours. God has not seen fit to reveal to us to what extent the spiritual creatures, good and evil, who constantly surround us, can penetrate our thoughts. They, of course, can form a very accurate conclusion from what they see and hear, combined with their acquaintance with the past events of our lives; but beyond this we have no warrant for supposing that they know more than the Lord, for special purposes, is pleased to reveal to them.

One knowledge the angels do certainly possess, and that the very chiefest of all knowledge—they know God: and as the depths of the riches of His knowledge and wisdom are unfathomable, they evermore seek fresh acquisitions in that divine science. The apostle Peter, speaking of the mysteries of redemption, “the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” the preaching of the Gospel, “with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,” adds, “which things the angels desire to look into.” 1 Peter i. 11, 12. And that they do look with adoring joy upon the mighty work, is manifest from their joining in the heavenly song, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” Rev. v. 12. How far they may be employed in overseeing the minute cir-

cumstances by which a sinner is often brought to the hearing of the Gospel, by entering some particular place of worship, taking up some particular book, or other similar occurrences, we do not know: but this we do know, that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one such repenting sinner. The expression, “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that *shall* be heirs of salvation,” would lead us to suppose that the children of God even previous to their effectual calling, are placed under the care of these bright and loving creatures, whose holy nature must often be deeply grieved at the iniquity of man; knowing, as they do, the unspeakable immensity of the stake which he so daringly trifles with, and the infinite love of God, against which he so basely and insolently sins.

There is a knowledge too, which, no doubt, is revealed to the angels—that of the Lord’s peculiar favour to certain individuals. Gabriel expresses this to Daniel, when about to communicate to him what the Lord had informed him of. “O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandments came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved.” Dan. ix. 22, 23. And again, on another occasion, “O Daniel, a man greatly beloved”—Dan. x. 11; and “O man, greatly beloved, fear not” v. 19. In addition to this, they are unquestionably endowed with very high degrees of discerning and discriminating knowledge. In that beautiful passage, where the woman of Tekoah with such singular eloquence and effect, pleads with David, covertly purposing to soften him towards his banished son, these expressions occur:—“The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable: for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad;” and again, “My lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth.” 2 Sam. xiv. 17—20. This wise woman of Tekoah, whose wisdom appears to have been of a worldly description, and who was prompted by Joab, certainly flattered the king; but there is no reason to suppose she flattered the angels, concerning whom we are led, on much better authority, to

form a very high estimate. How exquisitely beautiful are her words, in relation to the Lord's reconciling mercies! "Wherefore hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished. For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again: neither doth God respect any person, yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him;" verses 13, 14. The justness of this sublime picture of man's helplessness and God's rescuing power, gives weight to what this singular woman also said of angelic wisdom and knowledge. Paul, too, refers to them, when he says, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. i. 8: and again: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, and as a tinkling cymbal." 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

But whatever difficulty we may find in ascertaining the extent of angelic knowledge, of the power of the angels we are taught to form most stupendous conceptions; or rather it is a power the greatness of which we cannot conceive. The terrible slaughter of the first-born in Egypt, was the work of one angel, and accomplished within so short a space of time, that the cry rose simultaneously throughout the land. Another display of this awful power took place, when the army of Sennacherib laid siege to Jerusalem. "Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians, an hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses." Isaiah xxxvii. 36. A hundred and eighty-five thousand warriors slain with a stroke, as they lay stretched securely slumbering in their tents, was a mighty achievement; and in like manner the visitation provoked by David's sin in numbering the people, though it is called a pestilence, was effected by an angelic hand. 'The Lord sent pestilence upon Israel, and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men. And God sent an angel unto Jerusa-

lem to destroy it; and as he was destroying it, the Lord beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough; stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem: then David and the elders of Israel who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned, and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people that they should be plagued. The angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David, should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord, in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the Lord. And Ornan turned back and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. . . . And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and called upon the Lord; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering. And the Lord commanded the angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof. At that time when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there. . . . But David could not go before, it to inquire of God; for he was afraid, because of the sword of the angel of the Lord." 1 Chron. xxi. 14-30. What a splendid vision is here revealed to us! A creature of surpassing strength, glorious brightness, and probably of great magnitude, standing in mid-air, with a glittering weapon, the stroke of which was instantly mortal, stretched over the holy city, which lay in beautiful repose beneath an evening sky. In the act of smiting, the angel's hand was arrested, and he stood in suspense, the weapon still flashing in his grasp, to know what farther he should do: David had offended the Lord too deeply by listening to the

suggestion of Satan, to be honoured with any direct communication: neither was the angel permitted to address him, but through Gad the seer, who had announced the coming judgment on the land. The angel directed a sacrifice, and continued fully visible in that menacing position, so that the sons of Ornan hid themselves from his terrible appearance. It was not until the smoke of the burnt-offering had ascended before the Lord, at once rendered and pronounced acceptable by the kindling of heavenly fire, that the dreaded sword was sheathed. Yet even so, its terrors remained so powerfully impressed on the mind of the king, that he dare not approach his temporary altar, from fear of the glorious being who still watched his proceedings. This is one of the glimpses afforded us of what is perpetually passing around, but which our eyes are holden from seeing. We talk of casualties, of epidemics, of contagious disorders; but we see not the hand that with unerring fidelity deals forth each mysterious dispensation, according to the Lord's appointment. The same presumptuous folly that has clothed evil spirits with fantastically frightful grimace, has invested the holy angels with a puerile silliness of appearance, wholly at variance with every scriptural representation. Baby faces between a pair of bird's wings, destitute of bodies; slim girls with long, flowing ringlets, and pinions well feathered—these are the imaginary likenesses of things in heaven, which we are warned not to represent to ourselves; and the terribleness with which the Lord, for his own glory, has invested these ministers of his, is wholly lost sight of.

The angel who met Balaam in the way, was of a formidable aspect. The poor beast, who showed a better feeling than the mercenary wicked prophet, saw him and turned aside each time, until the narrowness of the way preventing this, she fell down, and was cruelly chastised for it by her senseless rider, whom she was enabled miraculously to reprove. "Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand." Numb. xxii. 31. The angel's address was very severe, and his look so alarming, that all Balaam's thirst for gold could not tempt him to advance, until he

received distinct permission to do so. We may be assured that the spectacle of a hypocrite like Balaam, making use of the Lord's name to forward his own selfish, unprincipled ends, and ready for filthy lucre's sake to call down a curse on God's people, or more effectually to destroy, by alluring them into sin, could not but be unsupportably odious to a holy angel, ever zealous to vindicate the honour of his glorious King; and to such a man, the face of a "ministering spirit" would be fearful indeed, if, like Balaam's, his eyes were opened to meet the indignant gaze of God's true servant.

Angelic power was put forth to shut the mouths of the hungry lions, among whom Daniel was cast to be devoured. The prophet tells us so. "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lion's mouths, that they have not hurt me." Dan. vi. 22. Daniel was indeed most peculiarly favoured by the ministry of angels, and by the intimate footing in which Gabriel appeared to place him; while the prophet's deportment toward his celestial interpreter was beautifully humble and respectful; and in his communications, which have more of a colloquial and confidential tone than any recorded in the Old Testament, the angel certainly shows himself to be a powerful warrior and champion, continually engaged in battle. "The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia." It is for man they fight; for rebel man, who is himself too generally fighting against God, or at least neglecting, with wanton disregard, those interests over which the angels of the Lord tenderly watch. Against us are arrayed principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places: but in the unequal contest we have great and potent allies, whom the Lord Jesus has commissioned to serve us according to our need, in warding off, no doubt, many bodily dangers not less imminent than the jaws of the hungry lions were to Daniel, though often unseen and unsuspected by us.

A simple student of Scripture, unacquainted with the received notions of poets, painters and sculptors, who should undertake to pourtray an angel of God,

would probably represent him under a very different aspect from any that we are accustomed to connect with the idea ; because we, the bond-slaves of custom ever ready to be misled by vain traditions received from our fathers, and incapable of independent thought, or rather indisposed to it, adopt the prevailing error that saves us the trouble of reflecting, and content ourselves with grotesque devils, and namby-pamby angels. Surely both are, to mortal gaze, most terrible ! There are men upon earth, whose withering scowl of malignant ferocity, treachery, and reckless desolation of heart, may convey to the shrinking observer a faint idea of what must emanate from the countenance of an evil spirit, " seeking rest and finding none," " going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it," for the sole purpose of venting his cruelty on mankind : but where shall we look for the likeness of an angel ? Beautiful they must be, because all God's unblemished works are so ; and calm they must be, for holiness and happiness are always calm : but this earth, defiled by sin, and broken into helplessness, contains nothing to furnish us with a conception of the character that spotless purity and over-mastering power must impart to those who possess both. The expression of a very young and lovely infant's countenance is the nearest approach that earth can make to heaven : but, alas, the taint is there, though as yet comparatively undeveloped ; and who could picture the feeble lump of clay arrayed in the terrors of a warrior of heaven ?

Let us but examine of what class of his works the Lord principally speaks ; when answering Job out of the whirlwind, he sets before him a small part of the wonders that, even in this visible world, fling man into such a fearful distance of ignorance, obscurity, and contempt. The ocean with its proud waves, and secret springs, its garment of clouds, and swaddling band of thick darkness ; the horse, with his neck clothed in thunder, pawing in the valley, rejoicing in his strength, mocking at fear, and swallowing the ground with fierceness and rage. Behemoth, taking in a river with his eyes, and trusting that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth ; Leviathan, making the deep

to boil like a pot, with eyes like the eyelids of the morning, esteeming iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood ; these are the works of the Almighty on which he chiefly dwells when causing the patriarch to meditate on the greatness of his majesty and glory : and we cannot doubt that he has clothed in more than thunder the forms of his celestial hosts, engaged as they constantly are in battle with myriads of mighty opponents. The effect produced on Daniel by the appearance of an angel, and on the sons of Ornan ; on Moniah and his wife, and on the apostle John, who even after the vision of the Lord himself, and all the glories of heaven, was twice so overcome by the greatness of his angelic companion, that he fell down at his feet to worship him, all, with many other instances, tend to impress us with the belief that an angel, however beautiful, is still exceedingly awful. He is the warrior's subject of a king, whose sovereignty is resisted, and his will opposed by the wretches whom he formed out of nothing : how can the servant's aspect be that of repose, so long as his adored Master is resisted, grieved, and wronged by the insolent rebels of earth and hell ? No ! a victory has to be won, before the holy angels sheath their flaming swords, or lose the terrors of their stern and wrathful looks, now bent on every side to track the mazes of the insidious foe, and to repel him from the invisible boundary of the Lord's inviolable fold.

In speaking of angelic power, we must not exclude the property of actual, physical strength. The general opinion as to a celestial being, seems to exclude all that is material : but it is impossible to reconcile this with the facts recorded in Scripture. Shadowy beings could not have made themselves palpable to the touch of mortal hands, as when the angels forcibly drew Lot into the house, or when they led him and his wife and daughters from the city, or when Peter felt himself smitten on the side ; or in other instances, to be enlarged on as we proceed. A body perfectly tangible may become invisible, as our Lord, whose body we know to have been truly a human body in every respect, repeatedly proved ; and that our insensibility to the presence of these ministering spirits, is the effect of blindness on our

part,—probably the consequences of our sin,—we learn from the prayer of Elisha, who desiring to pacify the young man's fears did not ask that a heavenly guard might be sent to assure him, but only that his eyes might be opened to see what was actually present. Our Lord says, that in the resurrection his people shall be "equal unto the angels." Luke xx. 36. Now, we know, to a certainty, that men will rise with their bodies; that this mortal shall put on, not immateriality, but immortality—1 Cor. xv. 53; and if angels are incorporeal spirits, certainly there must be either an inferiority or a superiority to those with whom it is expressly said they shall be *equal*. Bodies like those which we now inhabit, in substance, they probably have not, although we have sufficient proof that all which we call the laws of nature, may be suspended or reversed at the divine will, without working any change in our natural frames: as in the case of the three Jews, who walked unharmed in the midst of the fiery furnace of Babylon—Dan. iii. 27; and the prophet Ezekiel, who was lifted up and borne through the air—Ezek. iii. 14; and Jonah, who remained uninjured for three days and nights in a place when in much less time, according to those laws of nature, not only would his life have departed, but the framework of his body become decomposed and utterly changed into corruption. Jonah i. 17. The scepticism of the human mind renders us willing rather to explain away the most unequivocal language into shadowy figures, than to submit our vain reason to the omniscience of God, our shallow philosophy to his omnipotence; and though the most delicate petal of a tiny flower, or the tinted particle that our rude touch brushes from the butterfly's wing, cannot subsist without nutriment, conveyed by divinely-formed mechanism for its support, we are unwilling to think that when the Holy Ghost, in reference to the manna, says, "Man did eat angel's food," (Psalm lxxviii. 25,) there is any ground given for supposing that angels are actually nourished by substantial aliment. We would start no new theory upon this subject; neither will we receive any, howsoever firmly established on human authority, that will not stand the test of Scripture. We believe that the unseen world is of a much

more tangible quality than is commonly supposed; that angelic forms are not made of vapour, neither are they when rendered visible to man, optical illusions. We know that "all flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, and another of fishes, and another of birds: there are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." 1 Cor. xv. 39, 40. That the celestial body is nourished we have many indications in Scripture. Our blessed Lord, speaking of the future state, says to his disciples, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke xxii. 29, 30. When we consider into what surpassing fragrance and beauty, the coarsest elements of earth and water are transformed by their mysterious circulation through the delicate frame-work of a plant, we may readily divest our minds of all that pertains to the grosser act of eating and drinking, and the common properties of such nutriment as man is accustomed to take, and believe that in heaven as on earth, the brightest, most perfect of the Lord's works is hourly dependent on his sustaining mercy, formed by his power, upheld by his grace, and nourished by the rich provision of his bountiful care.

SECTION III.

ANGELIC OBEDIENCE.

THERE is not, in the whole Bible, an instance where an angel appears to act independently of the divine command. Perfect submission is the unvaried character of the heavenly host. Our Lord expresses this, in the prayer that he has taught us to use: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." When John would have worshipped the angel who showed him the wonderful things that he has recorded for us, he was prohibited in these words: "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren

the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." Rev. xxii. 9.

We cannot doubt that the Holy Spirit has so framed the word of truth as to be a perpetual antidote to every form of error that should creep into the world: and the "worshipping of angels," which constitutes a prominent mark of the Romish apostacy, is provided against by continually setting forth their entire dependence and subordination. They never appear but as messengers: "God sent an angel into Jerusalem to destroy it." 1 Chron. xxi. 15. "My God hath sent an angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." Dan. vi. 22. "The man Gabriel whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." Dan. ix. 21. "At the beginning of thy supplication the commandment came forth, and I am come." (v. 23.) "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth." Luke i. 26. "Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews," Acts xii. 11: and in the last instance that is recorded by inspiration of an angelic mission, we read, "I Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Church." Rev. xxii. 16. However willingly performed to men, it is still a service appointed of God, and by him especially directed; they are "ministering spirits," sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. i. 14; and it is on this principle of holy obedience that we find them zealously executing God's righteous displeasure against the rebellious.

When the way to the tree of life was to be closed against fallen man, cherubim were set to guard the entrance, and with their flaming sword rendered it unapproachable: when that way was again to be thrown open, and the twelve manner of fruits yielded in their season, and the leaves to be applied for the healing of the nations, twelve angels are represented as standing at the gates that are never to be shut, day or night, not armed to bar the passage, but as guards of honour welcoming the happy comers to that scene of ev-

erlasting felicity. The variety of commissions which we know the angels to have executed among men, sufficiently attest their prompt obedience to every command of their glorious King, whom to serve is their privilege and joy: for "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven." Dan. iv. 35. "Thinkest thou," said our Lord to the disciple who smote the high priest's servant, "thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than ten legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Matt. xxvi. 53, 54.

We now proceed to review the instances of angelic interference, not already exhibited in these pages, as they occur in the Holy Scriptures: and as the work of vengeance is in no way consonant to the character of a holy angel, except when executed in loyal obedience to the command of his righteous King, who will punish evil-doers, we may class under the present head all the destructive operations of the heavenly host. In the song of Deborah, we have a curse sternly denounced, in language highly expressive of this feeling. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, against the mighty." Judges v. 23. The Lord needs no help of men or of angels; yet the armies of heaven stand around, eager to be employed against the enemies of his name and of his people; and to withhold the hand when such work is to be done, seems to them so hatefully unthankful, as to draw forth the most emphatic anathema against such offenders. To render a recompense to those who afflict Christ in his members, is indeed a part of angelic office, as David shows; when speaking of those who sought to destroy his soul, he says, "Let them be as chaff before the wind: and let the angels of the Lord chase them. Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the angel of the Lord persecute them." Psalm xxxv. 5, 6. In virtue of this office, they will fulfil their terrible commission in the last days of the present dispensation. "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a

furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Matt. xii. 42. They will come fully prepared for the terrible work of that great day: "It is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. i. 6, 7, 8. He "who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire, (Psalm civ. 4,) has pre-ordained them to act a most conspicuous part in the transactions of the last days, when they will execute judgment with unerring obedience, and rid the earth of those whose presence upon it is a blemish and a curse. For a more particular description of the part taken by angels in the ministry of wrath, we must turn to the book of Revelations, where a scene of awful magnificence is opened to us, in language of unparalleled grandeur.

The apostle saw, amid the mysterious splendours of the heaven which he was permitted to view, seven angels standing before God, having each a trumpet in his hand, the sounding of which was to let loose upon the earth a succession of woes very terrible to experience. In regular order, according to the command that had been given, each angel blew the trumpet; and when it came to the turn of the sixth, he was directed to loose four angels that were bound in the great river Euphrates, and who, of course, were evil spirits, having power given them for an appointed season to destroy men by means of a people over whom they obtained control. Interpreters expound this of the Saracens; but our business is with those who seduce their minds and govern their movements; and these are Satanic spirits, loosed for the purpose by one of the angels of God. Rev. ix. 13—19. After this, the apostle witnessed the great battle, in which Michael and his angels vanquished the dragon and his host, and drove them from heaven. Of the combat no description is given, for however the mind of John might be expanded and strengthened to sustain the tremendous vision, ours are not so fitted; and we should sink under any attempt to realize it. If the sight of one

mighty angel of God preparing to execute judgment on a city was so terrible to David as we have seen it was, what must have been the rushing to war of myriads in their most tremendous array; the personal encounter of two such hosts, one battling for the continued possession of "high places," where they retained unspeakable advantages, the other nerved to expel those infernal rebels and intruders from the presence of God.

We were told by our Lord, (Matt. xxiii.) that the reapers are angels; one is represented to us here as having a sharp sickle, to whom another angel who had power over fire, cries with a loud voice, "Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." Rev. xiv. 18—20.

But greater judgments remained; and the seven last plagues with which a guilty world should be visited, were committed to seven angels, who are represented as fulfilling their mission with more than passive obedience, if we may judge by the stern interest with which the result of their proceedings was watched by their heavenly companions. When the third vial was poured out upon the rivers and fountains of waters and they became blood, John continues, "I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." Rev. xvi. 4—7. But in no part of the inspired word do we find such a display of angelic indignation and high displeasure as in the chapters which follow immediately upon this. The occasion of this strong exhibition is the rise of that very system which has exalted the angels into objects of worship; and we must refer to the powerful principles of perfect obe-

dience implanted in their spotless bosoms the extreme wrath with which they regard this blaspheming apostacy. "There came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication," Rev. xvii. 1, 2. Having taken him into the wilderness to show him the typical representations of Papal Rome, the angel proceeds to explain to him the mystery, ending with an assurance of her coming dissolution. "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power and the earth was lighted with his glory; and he cried mightily with a strong voice saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Rev. xviii. 1, 2. Another voice from heaven summons God's people out of her, and adds, "For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and render unto her double, according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her." Verse 5—7. These are terrible denunciations from the lips of a holy, loving angel: they show how abhorrent to all godliness is that great mystery of iniquity which assumes to be the only true religion of Christ. How stern is the following apostrophe uttered by the same angelic voice, in the view of her terrible desolation by flaming fire! "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her!" Verse 20. Yet another exulting spirit comes forward to swell the triumph. "A mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill-stone, and cast it in the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." Verse 21. In the following burst of solemn rejoicing, the angels are no doubt included: "And after these things I heard

a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore which did corrupt the earth with her fornications, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia." xix. 1—3. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Verse 6. It was in the midst of all these glorious sights and sounds that John fell down to worship the dazzling creature, who is represented as being one of the seven angels holding the seven last plagues and whose reply so remarkably harmonizes with the Lord's declaration that his risen saints shall be equal to the angels. "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Verse 10.

There are two classes of persons to whom the foregoing passages of holy writ may convey a serious and salutary warning. One consists of those who denounce the study of unfulfilled prophecy as needless if not dangerous; thus indirectly charging God with placing a snare in our way, and of baiting it with the promise of a blessing to such as shall fall therein; they do not consider that what they set aside is called by inspiration "The testimony of Jesus." Moses, Isaiah, David, and the rest of the Old Testament seers, are allowed to have testified of Jesus, foreshowing what should be the nature, what the object and effects of his first coming into the world; and why, when they and the New Testament writers also, set forth the signs, and judgments, the glories connected with his second coming, should we be told to avert our eyes, to close our ears, and to resolve that until we see we will not believe? Speculative, no doubt, such studies are; for according to our great lexicographer, to speculate, means "to meditate; to contemplate; to take a view of any thing with the mind;" and in this sense faith itself is a speculative thing: God has fitted our minds to behold, to embrace, to rest upon "things hoped for . . . things

not seen;" and it is the highest privilege not only of nature but of grace so to do. Paul prays concerning his Ephesian Church, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of your calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe." Eph. i. 17—19. Shall we then thrust from us one of the greatest means of acquiring this knowledge, and forget that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy?"

The other class comprises those who regard it as a breach of Christian charity to speak with confident gladness of the final, utter, eternal overthrow of Popery, as an event near at hand; or as a thing not to be anticipated at all. They do not consider, perhaps they do not believe, that while they are speaking smooth things of Popery and hoping good things concerning it, that foul apostacy perpetually replenishing hell with lost souls provokes the wrath of God, and fires with holy indignation the pure angels of heaven. The charity in which such well-meaning Christians boast themselves is not the charity of the Bible. Love to souls is what the Lord inculcates; and proportioned to our love for the soul will be our unextinguishable hatred of that which betrays and destroys it. Babylon the great, the system that arrogates to itself the title of the holy Catholic Church, that assumes to be the mother and mistress of all churches, and to anathematize all without its pale—this great Babylon deliberately sins against light and knowledge; holds the Bible and withholds it from her slaves; professes Christ, and blasphemes him; raises an edifice seemingly on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and fills it with idols, thus committing and drawing all her votaries all over the world to commit what God declares to be spiritual adultery, most hateful, most insulting to him. The angels who are represented in the Revelation of St. John as loudly exulting over the violent fall of this anti-christian power, have been ministering spirits to those who in the dungeon, on the

rack, and amid the flames glutted her murderous cruelty with their life-blood, and glorified the Lord Jesus by rejecting, with abhorrence, her sacrilegious rites. We cannot now enter into the depths of their feelings in the contemplation of her fearful doom: but we, if we belong to Christ, shall see what some of us now refuse to think of; and shall be constrained to glorify God by rejoicing over the fallen enemy of his kingdom and of his people; for "in righteousness doth he judge, and make war."

Babylon being thus doomed and destroyed, it remains but that all the enemies of Christ should assemble for a final overthrow; and here we have another splendid image presented to us. "I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." (xix. 17, 18.)

The last act of the militant angel, distinctly recorded in Scripture, is one which we must all look forward to with joyful anticipation. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand: and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." (xx. 1, 2, 3.) What part the holy angels will take in the scenes that are to close earth's history, we are not told. The loosing of Satan from his prison will lead to another outbreak of human wickedness; but fire coming down from God out of heaven is named as the instrument of the rebel's destruction; and in the awful judgment that follows, no mention is made of angelic ministry in the execution of God's terrible decree on those who are not found written in the book of life. Thenceforth nothing but harmony, joy, and the peace of heaven, will remain for

the angels and those who are made equal to them. We have done with the dispensation of wrath, and now go back to the commencement to trace out the many instances in which Scripture reveals them in the sweet and gracious offices of love and protection to the people of the Most High.

SECTION IV.

ANGELIC MINISTRY.

WHEN treating of angelic ministry, we must bear in mind the sympathy which exists in their bosoms, for the angels know themselves to be by nature liable to fall, even as Adam was; and that the same electing love which raises the sinner, and sets him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, also preserves them from the guilt and condemnation of Satan and his crew. The rejoicing that takes place in heaven when a soul is brought to God in penitence and faith, is a proof of this; and we shall find, as we go on, many indications of tender sympathy on the part of the angelic ministers of God's mercy to man expressed by so much condescending gentleness and delicate consideration, as we may truly call it, for the weaknesses of our poor fallen race, that when we divest an angel of his fabulous characteristics, and picture him to ourselves the exceedingly majestic, formidable creature that Holy Scripture describes, we may well feel our hearts melted into grateful affection for these our glorious and highly privileged "fellow-servants." May the Creator and Preserver alike of angels and of men, be with us to direct, to guard, and to bless our inquiries into the precious record of these angelic ministrations of mercy and love!

The first instance we meet with is that of Hagar in her desolation and distress, brought on herself by despising her mistress. A fugitive, alone, and friendless, she had reached a fountain of water, and there rested; probably unable to choose a path in that desert. "And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the

way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou? and whither wilt thou go?" She could not answer the latter part of the interrogatory, and to the former she gave a reply that included no acknowledgment of her own misconduct; "I flee from the face of my mistress, Sarai." No reproof was given: not a word of reproach for her rebellious offence, but what was implied in the answer, proving how well the celestial speaker knew the actual circumstances of her case. "And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?" Gen. xvi. 7—13. There is a difficulty here that often meets us in similar circumstances: the speaker is an angel, of the Lord; yet the latter part of his address is delivered as in the person of God himself; and Hagar evidently considered that the voice was that of the Lord. In some cases we know that he is spoken of under the term angel: though in the appearance of the burning bush, where Moses says, "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the middle of the bush," he presently adds, "when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I." Exodus iii. 2—4. So that it may be supposed he first saw a glorious angel, and afterwards heard the voice of God himself. This seems at first to be confirmed by Stephen's narrative: he says, "There appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai an angel of the Lord, in a flame of fire, in a bush. When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight; and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord

came unto him, saying, I am the God of thy fathers; the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Acts vii. 30—32. Yet presently afterwards he adds, "This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, with the *angel* which *spoke* to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, who received the lively oracles to give unto us," verse 38. And once more, he says, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears. . . who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it," (verses 51—53,) and the plural is again used by Paul: "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? . . . For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." Heb. ii. 2—5.

By collating these passages we may learn caution in pronouncing that, when the Bible tells us an angel appeared or spoke, it was God who appeared or spoke: and we may also remember that the prophets very frequently make abrupt transitions from speaking in their own persons to speaking in the Lord's, without the usual preface, Thus saith the Lord: and we can readily suppose a created angel, fulfilling the office of an ambassador from the Most High, may do the same thing, delivering his Master's message in his Master's words; and so occasioning us to draw conclusions not warranted by the text. The instances in which we are undoubtedly to believe that by the term angel our Lord Jesus is meant, are Gen. xlviii. 15, 16, where Jacob says, "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long to this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads;" and in that remarkable passage, Exod. xxiii. 20: "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place I have prepared. Beware of him and obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy

unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries." This could hardly be spoken of any created being; and we know that the provocations of the Israelites in the wilderness are called by St. Paul "tempting Christ." 1 Cor. x. 9. These cautions recorded, we may be satisfied to proceed, with the plain word of inspiration to guide us.

The three men who visited Abraham as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day, (Gen. xviii. 1,) are no where called angels; but there can be little doubt that two of them were the same who immediately afterwards went to Lot, in Sodom. This we know, that it is distinctly said of Abraham, in reference to this event, "The Lord appeared unto him;" and that in the subsequent part of the narrative the Lord is represented as communing with him, and is repeatedly named. We will not intrude into what the Holy Spirit has so closely veiled, but proceed to the next chapter, where we are not left to guess at the nature of the persons spoken of. "There came two angels to Sodom at even," (Gen. xix. 1,) evidently in human form, for Lot, as Abraham had done proffered hospitable entertainment, and pressed it upon them with earnest importunity: the whole story shows that Lot had then no suspicion of their being other than mere mortal men, and that so far from needing his generous, self-devoted protection, they had power and authority to destroy the place, which was only respited until he and his should be delivered. Considering how wholly Satan and his infernal crew triumphed in those guilty cities, and how perfectly conscious of their presence and influence the holy angels must have been, their patient abiding in such a place, the purely defensive nature of the miracle which they wrought, and the deliberate manner in which they proceeded to extricate the favoured individuals committed to their charge, are very striking. Unmoved by the tumults in the streets, continuing all night, they quietly awaited the break of day, for Lot was not to quit the place unseen, or under the cover of darkness, nor to leave his ungodly son-in-law unwarned; and so long as he staid, his presence was a protection to the cities, and to every sinner in them. The mission of the angels was two-fold, first to deliver

the godly, then to destroy the ungodly; and this renders it so lively a type of the great day of the coming of the Son of man, when the angels will be sent to gather his elect from the four quarters of the earth, previous to the terrible destruction that shall fall upon his foes. The angels expressly said to Lot, "We will destroy this place the Lord hath sent us to destroy it," (verse 13;) and again, "I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither." (verse 22.) Yet they expressed anxiety, as though delay endangered him; "Escape for thy life: look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." (verse 17.) It is lovely to contemplate the earnestly devoted spirit in which these blessed creatures fulfilled their office, even forcing deliverance upon those who were loth to quit a spot containing their worldly substance, their kindred, and neighbours; alienated from God as the latter were by their wicked works. The fate of Lot's wife is remarkable, and as being peculiarly instructive, our Lord has commanded us to remember it when the time comes of which this deliverance was symbolical. She clung, it is true, to the hand of an angel, but she disobeyed God; and her celestial guardian could not avert the penal consequences of her offence. This may prove a lesson to three classes of people; angel-worshippers, worldly-minded professors, and unbelievers in what the Lord has revealed of his coming judgments. He makes his angel the means of our escape from danger, but leaves it not in their power to preserve a hair of our heads from his righteous visitations: he saves us from among the ungodly, in answer to the prayer of faith, but is not pledged to continue to us the good things of the world on which our hearts are set: and if, through unbelief, we stagger either at his promises or his threats, we break our covenant with him, and leave our souls to be gathered with the ungodly.

The next instance of angelic interposition, is the memorable one of Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son; and here we have the ambassador speaking indeed in the first person, but with the explanatory clause, "Saith the Lord." "And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham. And he said, Here

am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. . . . And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven a second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars in heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies." Gen. xxii. 11—17.

When Abraham instructed his faithful steward Eliezer to seek a wife for Isaac from among his kindred, he confidently assured him that the Lord would send an angel before him to prosper his way; and this the servant repeated to Rebekah's family, when relating the extraordinary manner in which he had been guided. Gen. xxiv. 7—40. It is a beautiful instance of prayerful faith on man's part, and an answering providence on that of God. Eliezer was directed, and his way was prospered in a most marvellous manner. And why marvellous? because of our unbelief, which rarely can attain to such child-like reliance on the promises of God, or we should continually experience the same proofs, that what he hath promised he will also perform.

Jacob's vision has already been noticed: he saw a ladder set upon the earth, the top of which reached to heaven; and the angels of God ascended and descended upon the ladder. The interpretation of this is seen in the declaration of the Lord, who stood above the ladder, and who repeated the glorious promise—"In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxviii. 14. The incarnation and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, is the procuring cause of what we are now considering—the ministry of those angels who could never have worn towards man any other aspect than that of stern, irreconcilable hostility, had man remained under the dominion of Satan, to do forever the work of his conquering master. It was through the dying and rising again of the Son of God, to be accomplished in the fulness of time, that

angels could find a medium of friendly communication with earth; and Jacob knew this, assuredly; for his was the saving faith described by Paul, "the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen." Hab. xi. 1.

The cloudy pillar had an angelic attendant. "The angel of God which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them, and it came between the camp of Israel and the camp of the Egyptians." Exod. xiv. 19, 20. We can hardly read this without remembering what Gabriel said to Daniel, of Michael the archangel, calling him "the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people." No doubt there were myriads of those celestial warriors seen afterwards on the mountain of Dothan; but they had a leader appointed of God: and of him it is said afterwards—"I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perrizite, the Hivite, and Jebusite." Exod. xxxiii. 2. And to prove that this was to be really a created angel, the Lord also says—"For I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way." Exod. xxxiii. 3.

We meet no more with angels, until Balaam's alarming encounter, which does not come under this head; and then we lose sight of them again, until the people being securely settled in the promised land, and proceeding, as usual, to provoke the Lord by their disobedience, they are strongly reprov'd, yet with much mild dignity, by a commissioned minister. "An angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers: and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you: but they shall be as thorns in your sides; and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto

all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept." Judges ii. 1—4. Although the purport of this message was menacing, the tone was very gentle, and the remonstrance, "Why have ye done this?" following close on the remembrance of God's faithfulness to his great promises, was well calculated to melt the people as it did; so that for a time they returned to their duty, and served the Lord; but revolts ensued, and deliverances were granted on their temporary repentance, until on another provocation, the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years. The children of Israel, greatly oppressed and impoverished, cried unto the Lord; and then followed this interposition; "There came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said unto him, The Lord, is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." It does not appear that Gideon suspected the celestial character of the person he conversed with: indeed, it is certain he did not; and the respectful style in which he addressed the stranger must have resulted from perceiving in him so much of dignity, as demanded it; while an equal degree of benevolence in this aspect, doubtless led to so frank a tone, in answering one who might be a spy of the enemy. The narrative proceeds:—"And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." This seems to have excited Gideon's hope that his companion's was indeed a message

from the Lord: probably he took him for a prophet. "And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. And the angel of the Lord said unto him, 'Take the flesh, and the unleavened cakes and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh, and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God: for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face. And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee, fear not: thou shalt not die.'" Judges vi. 11—23.

After this remarkable interview with an angel messenger, we find Gideon receiving communications direct from the Lord himself; but the way in which he was prepared for these revelations was exceedingly beautiful. The angel probably appeared as a wayfaring man, since we read of the staff that he had in his hand; and the language in which he addressed the young thresher of wheat, was exquisitely adapted at once to encourage and to prepare him for fuller manifestations of the divine favour. After this, we hear of no more angelic visits: the language is uniformly, "The Lord said unto Gideon," and under the immediate direction of Jehovah, he wrought all his stupendous exploits, delivering Israel, and preserving peace within her borders to the end of a long life.

There is something remarkable in the frequently abrupt transitions from the description and language of an angel to the presence and the voice of God himself. We have seen this in the first communication made to Moses, from the flaming

bush; and surely it is at least equally consonant with reason and Scripture to suppose the Lord graciously prepared his weak, sinful creatures to hear His voice, and to be sensible of his special presence, by this method of heralding Himself, as to insist that when an angel is distinctly named, the Lord Jesus is the person intended. It is dangerous to put arbitrary interpretations on God's words, for which we have no direct authority from Himself; the determination fully to comprehend and account for "secret things," which "belong unto the Lord our God," may lead to presumption, to "foolish and unlearned questions," and perhaps to very dangerous errors connected with the person and office of the Lord Jesus: while by receiving in its most obvious sense what the Holy Spirit has moved his servants to write for our learning, we cannot greatly mistake. An inspired apostle has told us, that the created angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation." We find throughout the Old Testament, and in the book of Revelation, angels constantly described as engaged in this very work; and why should we question their identity? why persist in understanding the greater part of these descriptions of angelic ministry as referring to Him of whom it is especially testified that "He took not upon Him the nature of angels." Heb. ii. 16.

Gideon being gathered to his fathers, and Israel, as usual, continuing to revolt, and to provoke the Lord, they were repeatedly chastised by the hands both of foreign and domestic tyrants. At length, after more than one generation had passed away, the gracious and merciful God whose Holy Spirit they grieved with their iniquities, prepared to raise up another deliverer, and sent a heavenly messenger with the tidings. The history is remarkable, and deserves particular attention. Manoah, a Danite, had a wife who was barren; "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now, therefore, beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: for lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come

on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarete unto God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name." Judges xiii. 3—6.

Here we see that the angels, on such occasions, appeared in a perfectly human form, so as to be taken for mortal men; but there was that in their countenances—probably the emanation of minds perfectly holy, obedient, and faithful, and habitually engaged in the contemplation of the Deity—which, to the corrupt nature of fallen man, appeared "very terrible." To such "beauty of holiness" had the countenance of Moses attained, while wholly separated from earth, and the grosser elements of man's ordinary sustenance, having "seen God" for forty successive days on the mount. So, likewise, shone the face of Stephen on the very verge of that martyrdom which was peculiarly honored in being the first under the Christian dispensation. The woman does not appear to have taken the angel for more than what she called him, "A man of God;" a prophet; and the expression that she used in describing the majesty and brightness of his aspect was not an unfrequent one, in days when angelic faces were not so strange upon earth as now they are. We probably, associate no idea of terribleness with that trite expression, "an angelic countenance; we know not, alas! what man has lost, even in outward show, by revolting from his God.

Manoah's wife went on to repeat exactly what the angel had said: "Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born." A beautiful instance of simple faith! He makes no question of the matter, refers it all to God, and speaks of the child, which as yet existed but in the divine promise, as though it was even then about to be born. We may safely assert that Manoah was a man of prayer, who thus calmly, thankfully received the answer to his accustomed supplications.

The lovely and instructive history proceeds: "And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. And the woman made haste, and ran, and showed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. And Manoah said, Now, let thy words come to pass! How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him? And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Of all that I have said unto the woman, let her beware. She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I command her, let her observe. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. And the angel of the Lord said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour?" It is impossible to pass over this grateful, and doubtless patriotic sentiment, for Manoah would have proclaimed that there was a prophet in Israel, and have sent his oppressed, afflicted, guilty countrymen, to inquire of the Lord at his mouth. There is a nobleness in the language of this Israelitish pair the more striking from the simplicity and humility that accompany it. His request was not granted. "The angel of the Lord said unto him, Why asketh thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?" The margin reads, Wonderful: and because "Wonderful" is one of the names by which our blessed Lord is called, some have assured themselves that it was Christ himself who spake. We see no ground whatever for the assumption; the angel Gabriel announced to Zacharias the promised birth of a son in his old age; one far greater than Samson; and he too was sent to

Mary with tidings infinitely more important than either: it is surely, therefore, too much to catch at a single, doubtful word, to introduce the Lord of angels on such an occasion as this. Considering how prone the Israelites at that time were to idolatry, the very reason of Manoah's question was sufficient to prevent his obtaining an answer. The holy angel would not give his name to be enrolled among the new gods of Israel. "So Manoah took a kid with a meat-offering, and offered it upon the rock unto the Lord; and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God." The greatness of the miracle, and his surprise at discovering the celestial character of the Being with whom he had so familiarly conversed, were such that he went beyond the mark, as he had before fallen short of it, and imagined that he had, instead of a mere prophet, seen Him whom none can look upon and live. His wife's encouraging reply is admirable: "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have shown us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these." Verse 23. They would not have received instructions as to the bringing up of a child yet unborn, if their own lives were about to terminate; nor could it be in wrath that the Lord had made known to them purposes so gracious towards themselves, and towards the whole nation who were to have a deliverer in their offspring, whose birth and destiny were probably thus intimated in order to impress men's minds more deeply with the assurance that the promised deliverance was wholly of the Lord.

SECTION V.

ANGELIC SYMPATHY.

UNDER this head may properly be classed those peculiar ministrations that had reference to the prophets of Israel, from Elijah onward; and following the order in which they stand in the Bible, in preference to the chronological dates, we will briefly note them all. It will be remembered that the angel who showed the Apostle John the glorious things by him recorded, declared, "I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren the prophets; and of them which keep the sayings of this book:" (Rev. xxii. 9:) from which we may at least gather, that the interest taken by that heavenly guide in these wondrous revelations, was intense. When, therefore, an angel is deputed to communicate with an inspired prophet, we feel that there is somewhat more than a general ministration in it; the divine knowledge which the celestial being is commissioned to impart to his earth-born brother fills his own mind, and he appreciates the high distinction conferred on himself, as the vessel chosen to contain and to convey a treasure of which all the excellency is of God. The glory of its Master is concerned in what he communicates; its prospective fulfilment interests him deeply, as tending to show forth the Lord's faithfulness; and arrayed as he perpetually is against the dark, subtle enemies of man, he rejoices in every accession of strength, wisdom and knowledge gained by his poor, feeble ally. To one who is accustomed to dwell upon those beautiful portions of Scripture, the tenderness that bespeaks perfect sympathy is constantly apparent on the angel's part; together with an alacrity that shows how much heart the divine creature puts into his work.

First among those we have now to notice, stands the touching picture of Elijah, weary, exhausted and well-nigh despairing, in the wilderness. He had been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts, even to the braving of Ahab's power and Jezebel's hate. He had openly defied, most signally disgraced, and with determined justice had slain the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal in the sight of all:

Israel; whom he believed to be, with the single exception of himself, forsakers of God's covenant, destroyers of his worship, and murderers of his prophets. Throughout this transcendent work of faith and zeal he had not flinched; but now pursued by the sanguinary menaces of Jezebel, and believing that every man sought his life, the solitary outcast stretched himself under a juniper-tree, and, asking for death, became overpowered by sleep. With what pitying tenderness must the angel's heart have yearned over the unconscious slumberer, while employed in the humble office of baking a cake on the coals, and filling a cruse with water to place beside him! What a spectacle of want, and sorrow, and destitution, did the prophet present, immediately after that glorious display of triumphant faith and power on the sides of Mount Carmel! When all was prepared, "the angel touched him, and said, Arise and eat." 1 Kings xix. 5. Having done so, the prophet again laid down, and slept: "And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." He not only sets before him the nourishment provided, but graciously and tenderly urges on him the necessity of strengthening himself for the unusual exertion. Often have the afflicted children of God found comfort in this sweet record of his watchful care, and of the willing service that the holy angels render, when no human hand can help. When, under the pressure of bodily privation or mental anxiety they are hearkening to the suggestions of Satan, and murmuring to, if not against the Lord, some ministering angel is on the wing, bearing the succour they need, the comfort they pine for; and putting to shame the language of their unbelieving minds.

Elijah, we are told, "went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, the Mount of God." 1 Kings xix. 8. Whether that day's repast was made sufficient for the whole period, or whether his strength was daily renewed by a miraculous supply of bread and water, like that of his fathers in the wilderness, is not made plain: in either case, the Lord fed him by the hand of a ministering spirit, and he whom God fed

could know no want: he whom God strengthened, no weariness. He fulfilled his mission, not without farther communion with angelic helpers; for though, in general, the expression is, "the word of the Lord came to Elijah," without specifying the medium through which it reached him, we are told when Ahaziah sent to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, concerning the event of his disease, "the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite—Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria," and told him the prophetic words that he should speak to them. 2 Kings i. 3, 4.

Elijah's translation into heaven was by "a chariot of fire, and horses of fire," no doubt forming a part of the magnificent array of which we are next to speak as belonging to the armament of heaven: for when the servant of Elisha, terrified at the sight of the besieging host of Syria compassing the city, cried out, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" the prophet's answer was, "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." In answer to his prayer, the young man's eyes were opened; "and he saw; and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." 2 Kings vi. 15—17. Angels are not mentioned here; but however the blaze of the glory might enwrap, and so render them invisible, we may be sure it was not of chariots and horses that Elisha spoke when alluding to the number of his unseen allies. We may rather suppose the scene to have resembled what is very glowingly described by a first-rate poet of our day, in referring to this passage:

At the word rushed a cloud
From the crown of the sky:
In its splendours the sun
Seemed to sicken and die.
From its depths poured a host
Upon mountain and plain.
There was seen the starred helm,
And the sky-tinctured vane;
And the armour of fire,
And the seraph's broad wing;
But no eye-ball dared gaze
On the pomp of the blaze,
As their banner unfolded
The name of their King.

After Elisha, Isaiah had proof of the being, the brightness, and the benevolence of God's angels. He has related a very remarkable vision: "In the year that

king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each had six wings! with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, wo is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Isaiah vi. 1—7.

This sublime vision was the preparation for that wonderful strain of prophecy which has caused some, not inaptly, to term Isaiah the fifth evangelist. It was Christ's glory that he saw, and it was of him that he spake—(John xii. 41;) and this bright company of the seraphim were veiling their faces with awe before Him who was despised and rejected of men. In the midst of their solemn alternate song of adoration, the voice of a conscience-stricken man was heard, bewailing his sinfulness, and lamenting over his undone estate, the uncleanness of his lips, and the guilt of his people. Immediately a seraph is commissioned to remove his grief; and he, with the earnest alacrity that we have remarked, *flies* to the distressed seer, bearing not only a message, but a token of reconciling, sanctifying grace, repeating the impressive assurance, "thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." It appears to have been in the material temple in Jerusalem, that this revelation was made; but it is very remarkable how much the temple imagery prevails in representations of heaven itself; even in the descriptions given by John, who wrote in an especial manner for Gentile churches. In this vision of Isaiah, He was present who gives substance to the shadow, efficacy to the means; and a coal from off the altar was used, typical

at once of the purifying influences of the Holy Ghost, and of the flaming zeal that should burst forth in strains of glowing eloquence from the prophet's now-consecrated lip. This is the only place in the Bible where our translators have introduced the word seraphim.

We next come to the mysterious revelations made to Ezekiel, who uses the appellation "cherubim," in describing the heavenly beings whom he saw. It seems, so far as our dim faculties may penetrate the mysterious veil, as though these were a peculiar order of angelic creatures. The title is constantly given to those appearances which the Lord instructed Moses to place at each end of the ark of the testament, over the mercy-seat of which they extended their wings; and who are nowhere called by the general term of *angels*. Their station, we may venture to think, is one of more immediate proximity to the throne of glory than that of others; both from the position assigned to them in the material temple, which we are told was a figure of the true, or heavenly house of God, and from the descriptions given by Ezekiel. Cherubim also were placed at the gate of the garden of Eden, to wield the terrible sword of flame which barred all approach; keeping the way to the tree of life. It is a most inviting field for the imagination to rove in, these glimpses of the heavenly territory, and its angelic inhabitants; but imagination must not enter where we are humbly following the footsteps of inspiration, to speak according to the word of the Lord, neither more nor less; and we must be content to believe, without expecting fully to understand, what the prophet was enabled to convey of his own impression of those things which he beheld; so far, at least, as he makes distinct mention of beings whom we are taught to consider as a part of the armies of heaven. Whether or not, these appearances were real; whether the angels are immaterial, invisible essences, and therefore impossible to be seen by us in their natural state, and only clothed in the semblance of something tangible for occasional revelation to man, or whether the weakness of our powers, defiled and debilitated by original guilt, shuts them out from our mortal ken, is a point that never will be fully cleared up

until we come to know even as we are known; but there is quite as much to be said for the latter as for the former proposition, although the weight of names is certainly against us; men having inherited the opinions of their predecessors as a matter of course, and battled for all as belonging to them by rightful descent. By such means have successive generations been blinded to the meaning of many a rich promise and glorious prediction now on the eve of fulfilment; and the consequence of such mistaken impressions is but too likely to be that complained of by the prophet:—"Lord, when thine arm is stretched out, they will not see!" Most ingenious explanations have been affixed by various commentators to the minute particulars recorded by Ezekiel of the visions that he beheld; but with these we have nothing to do; our business being with the literal descriptions.

Ezekiel, being among the captive Jews carried into Babylon, was commissioned to bear to them many rebukes and remonstrances, mingled with most glorious promises, from the Lord. In the first chapter, he gives a full account of the appearance that he beheld; which is thus introduced:—"A whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire unfolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man." He proceeds to describe the four faces, four wings, and other peculiarities of these living creatures, who, he says, "ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning;" and of the immense wheels that were beside them; the crystal firmament that was directly over their heads, and the appearance of a sapphire throne placed above all, "and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." From the Lord, whose glory he thus beheld, he received a message to his people, the children of the captivity: and having thus given an outline of that which he beheld, the brightness of the objects being so dazzling that he could but speak of "the likeness of the appearance" as it then impressed his mind, he records in his eighth

chapter a farther revelation made to him in the presence of the same mysterious glory, when he was taken to behold the various idolatrous abominations practised in Jerusalem to provoke the Lord, and show also the terrible judgments about to fall upon the offenders. An angel, described as "a man clothed with linen, having a writer's inkhorn by his side," is sent through the city, to set a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sighed and cried for the abominations that were done; and six others, each with a slaughtering weapon in his hand, then proceeded to slay all who were not so marked, beginning at the sanctuary. This being done, and reported by the man in the linen garment to Him who sat on the throne, "he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city. And he went in my sight. Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court. Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory. And the sound of the cherubim's wings was heard even in the outer court, as the voice of the almighty God when he speaketh. And it came to pass that when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubim, then he went in and stood beside the wheels. And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between the cherubim, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen; who took it, and went out." x. 2-7. The conclusion of the vision is thus related: "Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim: and the cherubim lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them: and every one stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house: and the glory of Israel was over them above," (verses 18, 19.)

The word *cherubim* signifies flaming

ones; and we find either flame or its concomitant, a cloud of smoke, generally present, when the Lord was pleased to manifest himself, under the Old Testament, either in the temple or to his people apart from it; we are also told that the second coming of our Lord in great glory, accompanied with the holy angels, shall be in "flaming fire." We have just enough information respecting this order of the celestial servants of our God to believe that they have some special office of peculiar attendance on their King. David says, "He rode upon a cherub, and did fly," (Psalm xviii. 10;) and again—"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." Psalm lxxviii. 17. We may compare such expressions with the chariots and horses of fire seen by Elisha's servant, and that which took up Elijah into heaven; and without intruding improperly into things not seen, we may be allowed to believe that glimpses have been given into realities hereafter to be fully known and understood, while the assurance that such glorious intelligences do exist, and in great multitudes surround us, fulfilling each the will and rendering prompt service to their Master and ours, is most soothing to the child of earth who, exiled from the bright company of sinless beings pursues his way in loneliness of spirit, often feeling as though throughout the wide creation there was no being to sympathise with him now, though he may look forward to such communion hereafter as disembodied spirits can together enjoy.

Ezekiel had another vision, in which an angel showed him marvellous things: things that to this day are unfulfilled, and concerning which the church remains in greater perplexity than in almost any other prophetic matter. Having been brought in the visions of God to a very high mountain in the land of Israel, he says, "there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed." Ezek. xl. 3. This divine messenger measures out and describes to the prophet with most minute exactness, a city and a temple of which we as yet know nothing; but it is a marvellous instance of prediction and direction, continued through

no fewer than eight chapters, by the means of this angelic instructor, who almost appears identical with the angel described by St. John, as employed in like manner for his instruction.

We now arrive at that lovely portion of Scripture, the book of Daniel, and may trace more at large what has already been repeatedly noticed. Daniel was greatly favoured by direct revelations from the Lord: the king's dream and its interpretation were made known to him, to the conversion, as we may hope, of the once proud and blood-thirsty tyrant, Nebuchadnezzar. In like manner, he was enabled to show forth to the miserable Belshazzar his coming doom, with the downfall of great Babylon, the vivid prototype of that idolatrous harlot-city, Rome, which in our day rules and riots, and ripens for sudden destruction. Under Darius, the prophet again enjoyed such favour, influence and command, as moved to envy the selfish princes of the kingdom. They sought occasion, but found none, to carry an unfavourable report against him, to his royal patron: and at length they were driven to the expedient of inventing an offence, that Daniel was sure to commit, by making it penal to pray to the God of heaven. The device succeeded: Daniel prayed repeatedly and without disguise; and a few hours saw him cast into a den, where hungry lions were impatiently awaiting their accustomed meal. We are not introduced to that scene of peril, of darkness, and of horror—the noisome abode of ferocious beasts of prey; strewed with the splintered bones of the many human victims that Babylonish cruelty delighted, even as its antitype delights, to prepare for barbarous laughter. We only know, that after remaining there during the night, the faithful servant of the Lord was able to answer the king's sorrowful inquiry, by saying, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." Dan. vi. 22. He had other company than the ravenous beasts, who were thus chained back into the innocuous character that they bore in the garden of Eden, and to which they shall again be restored, when the Conqueror of sin and of death comes to reign over a renovated earth. The darkness of the dungeon was no doubt chased away

by the same "bright light" that shone around Peter in his prison; and angelic converse cheered the hours, while the noble beasts were crouching around, unconscious whence arose the calm, under the influence of which their ferocious feelings were so lulled that a lamb might have lain down among them in safety. The angel had doubtless power to intimidate, and forcibly to restrain the ravenous beasts; or the terrible nature of his aspect might have awed them into trembling submission: but it is more consistent with the loving, compassionate disposition of an angel, when dealing with those who are not at enmity with God, to use gentleness, and to bring peace.

But it was in the course of his prophetic visions that Daniel has related the fulness of angelic communication repeatedly made to him. These visions, in point of time, preceded his deliverance from the lions; the first being in the first year of Belshazzar. Here, the rise of the little horn, the Papacy, was revealed; and its final destruction is thus awfully described. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Dan. vii. 9—11. Troubled and grieved at the mysteriousness of these fearful things, the prophet "came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this," (verse 16,) and he received an interpretation, distinct and full, setting forth the grand outline of this world's history, until the glorious termination, when "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Verse 27. Whether the interpreter in this instance

was the same who afterwards became his teacher, Daniel does not say; but when at the end of two years another vision appeared, he says, "It came to pass when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold there stood before me as the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice, between the banks of Ulai, which called and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man; for at the end of the time shall be the vision." (viii. 15—17.) This is the first time we have mention made of Gabriel, the honoured messenger of so much mercy to man; but indeed the latter part of the book of Daniel brings us more in contact with angels than any that precede it; enabling us to form, as it were, an acquaintance with those whom we humbly hope to associate with through eternity.

Some years after this, when Darius had been made king over Chaldea, Daniel, computing the time revealed to Jeremiah, found that the restoration of his people to Jerusalem could not be far distant, and accordingly set himself to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, the promised mercy. He made a touching confession of sins, personal and national; pleaded the cause of God's afflicted exiles, and implored the removal of his chastening—the renewal of his former love to Israel. The prayer is one that we cannot too generally adopt, in reference to the present state of the Jews, and the sure word of prophecy which testifies that their second restoration is now drawing nigh. Having continued in this beautiful prayer for some time, the prophet says,—“And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplications before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.” Dan. ix. 20—22. The sequel

has already been quoted: and the revelation made to Daniel is so conclusive as to the time, the object, and the consequences of our Lord's first coming, that the Rabbinical teachers to this day withhold that part of God's word from their people, assured that it must at once enlighten them on a subject where, being themselves in darkness, they earnestly desire to keep their brethren shrouded from the light of day. Three years afterwards, when Daniel again was fasting and mourning before the Lord, another revelation was vouchsafed to him, more full, comprehensive, and remarkable, than any we can point out; for it embraces a period commencing with Daniel's time, and stretching out to the end of all things. The vision which he saw is very mysterious; one of the descriptions so closely resembling that which John gives of his glorified Lord, that we must pause to apply it to a created angel. "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude." Dan. x. 5, 6. This vision was unseen by Daniel's companions; "but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves." He was left alone, and fell into a trance: and in this state, "Behold a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words which I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Dan. x. 10, 11. It appears that there may have been a change of persons here: we are not told that the speaker was the same with him whose glorious appearance so overpowered a man accustomed to awful sights of heavenly splendour, and whose presence, though unseen, was so felt by his companions, as to send them trembling to a hiding-place. This last circumstance has no parallel in any record of the kind; for in all other cases the individuals were terrified only by what they saw and heard. We would, however, be reverently cau-

tious in deciding a matter infinitely too high for any child of man. When this last speaker had spoken farther, and told him of the opposition made by the prince of the kingdom of Persia, and the help given to him by Michael, and added that he was about to tell what should befall the Jewish people in the latter days, Daniel says,—"And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face towards the ground, and I became dumb. And behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my Lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength: for how can the servant of this my Lord talk with this my Lord, for as for me, straightway there remaineth no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me. Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, and said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee; be strong, yea be strong." Dan. x. 15—19. It is probable that this angel was Gabriel who had used language exactly similar on a former occasion, as being sent to instruct him, the man "greatly beloved." He proceeds to relate the wonderful things that it pleased the Lord to reveal for the comfort and encouragement no less than for the instruction of his church; and as we are told, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall everything be established." Such confirmation was added to the angel's assurance, "Then I Daniel looked, and behold, there stood other two, the one on this side the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and a half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words

are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." Dan. xii. 5—9.

When we read of things being shown in a vision, we are apt to regard it all as the imagery of a dream; and those who find it difficult to realize to themselves the actual existence of spiritual beings, always apply the word vision as opposed to what it actually imports: they interpret it to mean not something seen, but something not seen: a mental phantasmagoria, unreal, and easily produced by a disordered state of the bodily functions, affecting the brain. This, of course, no believer can for a moment venture upon connecting with any thing declared in Scripture; but many seem to think that what the inspired writers are described to have seen of angelic beings, was only a sort of allegorical representation; a vehicle for conveying to their minds certain impressions concerning the divine will and purpose. So far from agreeing in these phantomizing interpretations, we believe Daniel to have truly seen with his bodily eyes the angels of God, even as the keepers at the sepulchre and the disciples saw them at the Lord's resurrection; and as we shall see them when he comes in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels. God can speak to his servants without any such intermediate agency, as we find in a multitude of instances throughout the Scriptures; but in some cases he has seen fit to employ one or more of the heavenly host, and has also commanded his witnesses to record it for our instruction. We surely owe it to our Divine Teacher to receive with thankful humility and undoubting credence, what he has vouchsafed thus to reveal to us of the interest taken by his angels in the concerns of men; and to believe that a book, not one thing contained in which may we dare to take away or to alter, the whole being given by the inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that such a book is not a volume of riddles and allegories; but is a plain, comprehensible declaration, no less of what we are to believe than of what we are to do.

SECTION VI.

ANGELIC INTEREST IN THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

It may appear strange to devote a separate section to this subject, seeing that the whole is, so far, essentially Jewish: but we live in a time so peculiar, and the portion of the Old Testament which remains to be considered, bears so directly upon what we in our day look for, while it primarily treated of a former and very partial work of mercy, that we must especially point it out. Zechariah was contemporary with Daniel during the later years of that great prophet's ministry; and in the abundance of the prophetic revelations made to him, he was scarcely less favoured: but his visions have this distinguishing mark, that they refer almost exclusively to the literal restoration of the literal Israel to the land which God gave unto their fathers, and to their seed after them, for an inheritance to the end of the world.

Daniel sometimes beheld several individuals of the angelic legions uniting their testimony as to the divine authority of what was declared to him; but Zechariah saw them in larger numbers, and astir with great vivacity in the work of preparation for the return of his people from captivity. It is a glorious spectacle that this sublime book opens to us, and may well shame our cold-heartedness in a cause so dear to the inhabitants of heaven. For our example, no doubt, as equally for the encouragement of Israel after the flesh, is all this written down; and howsoever we may delude ourselves by the so-called spiritualizing of these things, if not to the exclusion at least to the national extinguishment of the Jews as a separate people, we shall yet find that a literal accomplishment will be given to every word which the Lord has spoken of, or to, the natural descendants of Jacob—yea, that one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away, until all be fulfilled.

We cannot fully enter upon the extraordinary instances of angelic kindness, and we may call it affectionate freedom of discourse, displayed in the book of Zechariah. He begins by relating, "I

saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind them there were red horses, speckled and white. Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will show thee what these be. And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest." Zech. i. 8—11. It has been decided by expositors in general, that the man who stood among the myrtle trees was the Lord Jesus; and this decision seems to be grounded on the sequel: "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me, with good words and comfortable words." (Verses 12, 13.) Christ being the one appointed Mediator between God and Man, it is alike vain and sinful to seek the intercession of any created being; but are we therefore justified in denying to the angels a privilege that we know from holy writ the spirits of the redeemed enjoy? John heard the souls of them that were slain for the testimony of Jesus, asking how long it would be ere their blood was avenged on them that dwelt upon the earth; and surely an angel might venture to remind the Lord that the time spoken of by Jeremiah, threescore and ten years, was now come to an end; and to ask how long it should be ere he would have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, which were to be rebuilt and inhabited again. In the first year of Darius, Daniel made his accepted prayer, grounded on his understanding by the books that the number of the years revealed to Jeremiah was almost fulfilled: and in the second year of Darius, Zechariah hears an angel remarking the same thing, in a tone of reverential entreaty.

Surely those holy, zealous servants of

the Lord are not less concerned than we are for the glory of his name, and confusion of his enemies in the exact performance of all his gracious promises. The Lord having answered the angel that talked to Zechariah "with good words and comfortable words," the purport of that answer was joyfully proclaimed by the angel; who then dictated to Zechariah what he was to declare in the Lord's name, of his merciful purposes to Zion, and his sore displeasure "with the heathen that are at ease." The angel next showed the prophet a symbol of the power of the Gentiles, scattering Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem; and of the destruction that awaited them for so doing.

It is very beautiful to mark the bustle and joyous activity among the heavenly hosts, when the Lord's purpose of immediate mercy to his people and his land was made known. "I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof. And behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, and said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle therein: for I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her." Zech. ii. 1—5. A splendid strain ensues, expressive of the coming revival, and more distant triumph of Israel in Jerusalem; after which, says the prophet, "He showed me Joshua the high-priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan: even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel." Zech. iii. 1—3. Whoever is meant by this angel before whom Joshua stood, one thing is certain; we have here the great adversary himself in person resisting the re-establishment of Israel as a nation, and the Lord silencing his malignant opposition, and repeating the blessed as-

urance, that the brand which he desired to consume was, indeed, by the Almighty arm, plucked from the burning. Joshua was then re-clad, and a mitre placed on his head, "And the angel of the Lord stood by: and the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; if thou wilt walk in my ways," &c. The prophet appears to have been lost in the contemplation of the things then promised to his beloved people, but he was recalled to witness farther wonders: "The angel that talked with me came again and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou?" (iv. 1.) He sees some typical objects: and with the respectful freedom that the condescension of his guide was well calculated to encourage, he asked, "What are these, my Lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my Lord;" (verses 4, 5.) The same form of interrogation, and an explanatory reply from the angel, occurs again five times; exhibiting most beautifully the indulgent temper of the holy angel, who continually invites inquiry, and evidently takes a high pleasure in making everything known to the prophet. The very expression used by our angel to another, "Run, speak to this young man," when the word to be spoken was an assurance of the coming restoration, abundance, and security of Jerusalem, indicates a feeling perfectly similar to that with which we would all hasten to communicate to a beloved friend any tidings of especial gladness and advantage. It gives rise to reflections, that ought at once to awaken our gratitude, and doubly to increase our zeal; for surely we cannot make light of such indications of sympathy on the part of creatures who have far less cause than we to rejoice in the Lord's returning love to his ancient, chosen people. The angels who, at different periods of his wonderful history, communed with Abraham, and made known to him, on some occasions, the will of the Lord, which at other times he knew by direct inspiration—those very angels, with all the perfection of memory belonging to their high natures and faculties, never impaired by sin, are watching the fulfilment of every tittle of what was

then foreshown. He who, by the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, pointed his drawn sword over Jerusalem, and gladly sheathed it at the command of her forgiving Lord, still looks upon her desolations, and yearns over the royal city of David, trodden under foot of the Gentiles; while a sword, more destructive than that which he wielded in the three days' pestilence, is upon her children from generation to generation, consuming not merely the life of the body, but extinguishing also that of the soul. Gabriel, who so minutely set forth to Daniel the dates of things which were to come, is watching for the time when Michael, the great prince that standeth for the Jewish people, shall "stand up," and bring the afflictions to an issue. He who reminded the Lord that his indignation against Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, had already burned on to the predicted threescore and ten years, is waiting now to see the days fulfilled, when a far longer and fiercer visitation of the divine displeasure shall have an end, and one angelic messenger may hasten another to run with the glad tidings of pardon, of jealousy for Jerusalem, of sore displeasure against the heathen who are at ease, and of the final fraying of every horn of pride that has contributed to scatter Judah and Israel. We naturally take a livelier interest in events of which we have ourselves seen the commencement, and fully expect to see the termination, than in those which began before our days, and are not likely to come to an end till we are gone. Thus it is that we may in some measure comprehend the feeling of earnest expectation with which the holy angels must regard the winding up of this world's history, the creation whereof, in its bright, unclouded morning, called forth their songs and shouts of joy. Every word of God to man was spoken in the presence of spirits both good and bad; and while the devils, who themselves are constrained to believe, and tremble, would fain retard the accomplishment of the Lord's merciful purposes, by stirring up the vile principle of unbelief, rebellion, and ingratitude in man's heart, the angels, though they can have no sympathy with unholy, unthankful, disobedient men, yet mourn over the delinquency that originated in the success-

ful wiles of a powerful and subtle foe, and long for the time when their King shall take to himself his great power, and reign triumphant over the earth, according to the sure promises, which they have often been commissioned to repeat and reiterate in his name. Regarding with holy indignation the work of malignant sin, as wrought by their apostate fellows in a creature once so fair and so good, they rejoice in the presence of God over even one repenting sinner, and celebrate each individual triumph of divine grace, as an earnest of what is ultimately to be accomplished throughout the whole earth. The glory of the Lord is intimately concerned in the exact fulfilment of every word that he has spoken; and no marvel if "the angels desire to look into" the gradual development of that mighty plan which is known to none but God alone, except as far as he has foreshown it in prophetic revelations, and gradually brings it to pass in the sight of angels, of devils, and of men.

All this we know from the sure word of God; and can we doubt of their intense interest in that particular family which for a long period of time constituted their only care? We say their only care as regards this earth; for throughout the Gentile world the system of devil-worship prevailed, all being sunk in idolatry; and it is morally impossible that with such the angels of God could have any fellowship, or behold without horror those detestable perversions of human intellect, those bold strivings against the inward law of man's conscience, that refused to acknowledge the glorious Creator in his visible works; and, turning his truth into a lie, gave that honour to stocks and stones, to beasts, reptiles, and their own vilest passions, embodied and deified, which was due alone to him who gave them rain and sunshine, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness. The only work that we can suppose the angels to have been engaged in among the heathen nations is that which we believe they are continually performing throughout the whole world—the bearing away from earth those rescued souls whose clay tenements are dissolved in infancy; and who, not having sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgres-

sion—that is to say, knowingly and wilfully, are yet laid under the sentence of bodily death—while the all-atoning blood of the Lamb is applied to them, cancelling the original debt, and they are eternally saved. This we firmly believe to be the case with every human being who dies in infancy; not that their quitting the body before they have wilfully sinned gives them any title to heaven; but that God, who will surround his throne with a great multitude whom no man can number, out of every kindred, and people, nation, and tongue, sets the seal of his electing love on a certain number, and takes them away; such early departure not being the cause but the effect of their salvation. Over these, we may well believe the angels have an especial charge, tenderly watching them during their transitory sojourn in the flesh, perhaps communing with their spirits, which though yet unable to act by the bodily functions, may be free to hold high and glorious intercourse with the unseen world—to us unseen—and then rejoicingly taking charge of their liberated souls, as our Lord informs us they did that of Lazarus, who "died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Luke xvi.

But with this exception, we repeat, one family of the human race monopolized the favouring care of the heavenly hosts during many successive generations. The angels cannot move a step, save as commissioned by their King; and he says to the people of Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Amos iii. 2. They alone were the recognised objects of his love; to them only were committed the revelation of his will; they were chosen, called, preserved, led, and by a succession of miraculous mercies, forgiven their transgressions, because of them, as concerning the flesh, Christ was to come; and because to them the gift and calling of God which are without repentance, insured a pre-eminence of national privilege forever.

And what a pre-eminence of privilege do they now, through the long period of the Gentile dispensation and their own dreadful depression, enjoy? Gigantic empires have arisen, and towered on high, and crumbled into dust: Babylon, the queen and the hammer of the whole earth,

is broken, and become heaps of burnt rubbish, and pools of stagnant mud. Of Nineveh no trace remains, by which to identify its very site; Greece, Persia, survive in name, but what now are the men whose fathers ruled the world? Rome indeed continues, and rules, but how? the battle axe and weapons of war have been superseded by the monk's cowl and the harlot's cup; and she is reserved to light up with the blaze of her burning the scene of Israel's predicted jubilee. In the midst of all these changes, the Jew abides the same; in every particular the same as when God led him out of Egypt, with one creed, one language, one liturgy, one sorrow, and one hope, he is found in every corner of the globe, a severed fragment of that exquisite design which the Lord shall again arrange as of old, to be the beauty and the glory of earth. Other people have changed their gods, which be no gods, and assimilated themselves to the abominations of neighbouring or invading unbelievers; and even Christianity, apart from the Papal apostacy which wholly unchristianizes itself, has separated into so many varying sects and denominations, that, to a superficial or ignorant observer, it appears to consist of a multitude of religions, each contradicting the rest; but in the midst of this stands Judaism, a blighted, but still a stately tree, unaltered in form and undiminished in size by the visitation that has bound up its sap, and shrivelled the once verdant leaf into dryness and corruption. Upon this noble ruin is fixed the eyes of the angelic squadron, the Maranaim who once met Jacob on his mysterious way; who surrounded the march of his descendants when traversing the depths of the sea, and the paths of the wilderness that so long shut them in; who heralded the presence of the Most High, when in clouds and darkness, with mighty thunderings and bursting flames of fire he descended on Sinai to commune with a man of that unspeakably, favoured and privileged race, and to establish a covenant with the whole people of Israel. Those angels well knew that the covenant is as immutable as the ordinances of day and night; and that though their offences be visited with the rod, and their iniquities with scourges, yet the Lord will not utterly withdraw his loving kindness, nor

suffer his truth to fail. Blighted and dishonoured as the leafless tree may appear in the sight of man, they know that the Lord hath said it shall again strike root downward and bear fruit upward; and that the glory of the coming deliverance and final honour shall so exceed whatever the people of Israel have aforesaid enjoyed, as to cause even the stupendous miracles of their wonderful beginning to be comparatively forgotten. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land." Jer. xxiii. 7, 8. These declarations are disbelieved or explained away by men, and the hope of poor Israel is esteemed a vain thing, while yet walking in darkness and having no spiritual light, he stays himself upon this word of the God of his fathers; but the angels, well knowing that word is not yea and nay, look forward with earnest expectation to the triumphant proof of his faithfulness with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.

We have no reason to suppose that the angels knew beforehand how our Lord would be rejected of his own when he came into the midst of them. Many among the Jews, like Hannah and Simeon, were waiting for the consolation of Israel: and when the aged believer held the child Jesus in his arms, and proclaimed him a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of his people Israel, it is probable that like the disciples after our Lord's resurrection, and even after he had opened their understanding to understand the Scriptures, he expected the kingdom to be at that time restored to their nation. Such would be the impression on the minds of the angels, so far as we can judge; and the joy with which the messages were borne successively of the approach of his forerunner, of his own conception, and of his birth, was undoubtedly a joy in which the chosen people of God, the Jews, were a very principal object. When Gabriel appeared to Zecharias in the temple, and announced the honour

about to be put on the house of the aged priest, he said of the promised child, "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." Luke i. 16. It was in the Jewish temple, in the midst of the Aaronic rites, and standing beside the altar of incense, that this bright angel was revealed to the officiating priest; and surely the heart of Gabriel must have glowed with holy joy, while remembering the promise that the glory of that latter house should exceed the glory of the former, immeasurably as it came short of it in external and internal magnificence; and a measure of resentful displeasure might well mingle itself with his gladness, when the chilling doubt of Zecharias was opposed to his declaration. The language of his reply is exceedingly lofty; "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak to thee, and to show thee these glad tidings." Luke i. 19. He could not but remember Daniel's simple faith and holy joy, when welcoming his more dim and distant communication of things that should come to pass long after the prophet's departure. Daniel's language was not, "Whereby shall I know this?" but, "O my lord, how long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" The angel proceeds to inflict the gentle but necessary chastisement provoked by the old Israelite's want of faith. "And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not be able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season." Luke i. 20. Here he seems abruptly to have departed.

Six months after, the same zealous angel was despatched on a mission for which the heart of each one who reads these pages, whether Jew or Gentile, ought to send up a song of thanksgiving to the Lord. It strictly belongs to this branch of our subject, since it was most peculiarly and exclusively a Jewish event, so far. He in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, was emphatically the seed of Abraham; and we shall see how peculiarly this was marked in the language of Gabriel. He "was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary. And

the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." This glowing and beautiful salutation, so expressive of delight in the honour to be put upon the simple maiden of Israel, and in the stupendous mercy about to be shown to man, has been perverted into an atrocious piece of blasphemous idolatry by the apostate Church of Rome, which like Satan himself, chooses the holiest things to pollute, and to make occasions of sin. Gabriel, seeing her troubled and perplexed at such an address from so glorious a personage, proceeded to encourage her; and telling her of the Son whom she was chosen to bear, he said, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his father David*: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." Luke i. 32, 33.

Now it is certainly very difficult, with any respect for scriptural example, or any regard to the inspired phraseology, to take that expression, "the house of Jacob," otherwise than as literally signifying the actual descendants of that patriarch. Believers of every nation are the children of Abraham by faith: they are spiritually called Israel in some passages: and Jerusalem which is above is the mother of us all; but "the house of Jacob" is as definite in its meaning as is "the house and lineage of David;" and we have just as much right to make a figure of the latter as of the former.

Our Lord's personal ministry also was so far exclusively among the Jews, that when the Syro-Phœnician woman besought him to heal her daughter, he answered, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: nay, he so far established the exclusiveness of the Jewish son-ship, up to that time, as to add, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." Moreover, if those were Gentiles who came from the East to seek the new born King of the Jews, the revelation of his birth being made to them not by angelic messengers, but by the appearance of a star in the visible heavens, and that when they were to be warned not to return to Herod, it was by an intimation from God in a dream, confirms the fact, that so

far the family of Israel after the flesh was that branch of mankind on which the angels of God fixed their regards, and to whom they ministered, and concerning whom they anticipated most glorious things. When Joseph was minded to put away Mary, an angel satisfied him that she had in no way deserved the suspicion that he naturally harboured concerning her; and this angel addressed him, "Joseph, thou son of David," with an obvious allusion to the promise so fondly cherished by every believing Jew. Accordingly to this head belongs in part the subject of the next section, and however disposed the wild graft may be to boast itself against the natural branches, we may rest assured that there is no event in man's history so intensely watched and anxiously waited for by the holy angels as that of the literal Israel, no longer abiding in unbelief, being once more grafted into their own olive tree, to blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

SECTION VII.

CHRIST SEEN OF ANGELS.

ONE part of "the mystery of godliness" consists in "God manifest in the flesh" being "seen of angels." 1 Tim. iii. 16. The Apostle Paul, who declares this, elsewhere speaks of himself and his brethren as being "made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." 1 Cor. iv. 9. But in order to acquire some little understanding of that amazing scene which opened upon the eyes of the holy angels, when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," we must revert again to the magnificent vision of Isaiah, who saw the Lord high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple; the winged seraphim standing before him, covering their faces with their wings, and crying one to another, as though too deeply struck to address the mighty One himself, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts." We must remember the prophet's exclamation of dismay and despair, for that he, a man of unclean lips, had seen the Lord;

and the process by which one of the seraphim was commissioned to remove his fear of present destruction. Then turning to the twelfth chapter of St. John's gospel, we find it written concerning Jesus of Nazareth, "These words spake Isaiah WHEN HE SAW HIS GLORY, AND WROTE OF HIM."

He, therefore, who was thus seen of angels, manifest in the flesh, being formed in fashion as a man, making himself of no reputation, taking upon him the form of a servant, and humbling himself even to the death of the cross, HE was the King, the Lord of Hosts, to whom the seraphim could not lift their faces, and of whose glorious holiness they spoke one to another in tones of solemn awe. Great indeed must be the love of those celestial creatures to our fallen race, when they could even rejoice in triumphant songs, because, for our sakes, that terribly glorious King of Heaven had become a "babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." Oh, that we could, in any degree, realize what was then seen of angels, that our cold hearts might glow with a portion of gratitude and love to Him! The greatest wonder in redemption is the frozen indifference with which man contemplates his Redeemer's work. Even the best of men in his best moments must be a spectacle to angels through his lukewarm composure, and the feebleness of his efforts to make known to his fellow-sinners what the angels, who themselves gained nothing by it, rushed in troops to communicate, and celebrated with songs of enraptured praise.

They had seen the Lord's Christ, as a mortal infant, his birth-place a stable, and his companions the beasts of the stall. Under the divine direction, they then proceeded to make known to some of the Lord's people the miracle of divine love. It is certainly the most exquisite picture in the whole Bible, if we can divest our minds of the absurdly childish idea which our prejudices have probably associated with the appearance of an angel, and portray to ourselves the majesty, no less than the beauty in which those splendid creatures are arrayed, when not walking the earth in the form and the garb of men.

There were "Shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night: and lo, the angel of the Lord came

upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid." This angelic herald, who came to proclaim his King and theirs, seems to have worn, as it were, his robe of state for the occasion. He "came upon them," probably standing between earth and heaven, as the mighty angel whom David saw, but not armed with a destroying sword; and the brightness that shone in his countenance, a glory derived like that of Moses' face, from contemplating the presence of God, shed a broad light on the group of astonished shepherds, who beheld in a moment the darkness of night turned into the blaze of day; and were terrified at the spectacle of so august a being. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you (Israelites) is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." How grand is the sequel! "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men!" It would seem as though the very wonder, not to say consternation, occasioned by seeing the Lord of heaven and earth so abased as they described him to be, were lost in the joyful assurance, that since he, the Prince of Peace, was come down to dwell on earth, peace must ensue in all her borders; and that such a token of good will to men was the sure earnest of defeat and destruction to the evil spirits who had so long borne rule over her population. The seed of the woman had appeared; the serpent's head would therefore now be effectually bruised; and since we may well believe it utterly impossible that angelic natures should conceive the extent to which man's hardened depravity could be driven by Satan, even to the crucifying of the Lord of glory, their benevolent joy knew no drawback; and with a sudden burst revealing themselves, as they were permitted to do, to those favoured Jews, they filled the visible space with their glorious forms, and poured forth the divine harmony of their combined voices, until ascending in the view of the

shepherds, they went away from them into heaven. Upon this scene the mind of infancy always seems to fasten with a peculiar feeling of its tender beauty; and "the child Jesus," the "babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger," often becomes the hope of a heart too young to comprehend the nature of its faith—a saving faith, we may not dare to doubt—in many cases where the wilful sin of childhood requires that such a hold should be taken of the atoning Saviour: and when the neglect of those whose general custom it is to defer the work of instructing a soul in the knowledge of God, until long after Satan has set his infernal imps to familiarize it with evil, would have the little one to perish, but for such merciful provision on the part of the Most High for those whom he purposes to remove by an early death, but not before they have sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.

The next appearance of an angelic watcher over the incarnate Lord, was in a dream to Joseph, warning him. "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." Matt. ii. 13. "Until I bring thee word,"—how zealously affected were these heavenly creatures in the good work it was their privilege to labour in! This angel was apprized of the bloody purpose of the tyrant, and knew that he should be permitted to watch the progress of his impious conspiracy against the new-born King, and to convey to the believing guardian of that most sacred charge, tidings of safety, when all peril was past. He seems to have cautioned Joseph against any possible deception from other quarters; he was not to return from Egypt until the same messenger, who now bade him flee thither, should again appear to authorize his quitting it. We may readily assure ourselves that bright squadrons of the highest angels of God, surrounded those poor fugitives, and kept at bay every foe that might have crept on their nocturnal path. Christ was at all times "seen of angels," and in one way or another they perpetually "ministered unto him." The assurance of safety, through Herod's death, was at length given by the angel in an-

other dream; and once more in the full sense of which the former deliverance had been but a prophetic type, out of Egypt God called his Son.

Of our Lord's early years no record is given, and we are not warranted in supplying the blank from any stores of imagination. Of this we are sure, that the Lord Jesus exhibited alike to angels and to men an all-perfect model of holiness, harmlessness, undefiled purity, perfect obedience, and that glorious righteousness by the imputation of which, all who believe on him are justified from all things: that he magnified the law and made it honourable, showing forth the sublime beauty of that in which man sees, alas! little to desire, and much to shrink from as grievous and burdensome. Thus he continued, to his thirtieth year, when he went forth to John in the wilderness to be baptized, and to receive that public testimony from heaven, the voice of the Almighty God, proclaiming, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" while the mysterious spirit descended and abode on him. John beheld this, and others, his disciples, chosen to bear testimony to this solemn anointing of our great High Priest; but their eyes were not opened to behold the glory that surrounded them—the sapphire throne, the fiery cherubim, the innumerable company of angels, and the many thousands of Israel, with the multitude of those who in all ages had looked forward, and by faith embraced the promise of the Seed of the woman, and having seen the day of Christ afar off, now witnessed his actual entrance on the arena of that terrible conflict which he came to wage. We can have but very poor conceptions of that awful hour, if we consider not the great cloud of witnesses, angels, and disembodied souls of men, who thronged to gaze upon the spectacle; and who, beyond doubt, likewise surveyed the personal encounter that followed it.

Of this we have before spoken, and exhibited the successive wiles of the devil to allure his mighty antagonist into some concession on which he might lay hold. He left the man Christ Jesus on a pinnacle of the temple, whither he had been permitted to bear him for the last trial of his steadfastness; and then it was that "angels came and ministered unto him."

Up to that moment they were not permitted to interfere: Michael and his holy angels might form in bright array, and the dragon's fallen angels might eagerly look on, panting for their master's success, but none durst interpose. The strife was personal, and the triumphant issue certain; for who among created beings, ever hardened himself against God, and prospered? "Seen of angels" at all times, it was not often that they were privileged to succour their incarnate Lord as now we are told they did. The cake and the cruse of water provided by the angel for Elijah's refreshment, were cheerfully prepared and courteously bestowed; but with what eager gladness of heart must those ministering spirits have brought to their gracious King the sustenance that his body, exhausted by the prolonged fast, then required! We may believe it to have been an epoch in the existence of the holy, happy creatures who were chosen to render this service and gently too; to facilitate his return from the giddy height to which Satan had borne him; and to listen to the gracious words that spoke acceptance of their devotion: for he who with such authority rebuked and commanded the unclean spirits whenever they crossed his path, had surely words of another tendency whereby to encourage the obedient, and to animate the zealous servant.

But from thenceforth unmitigated suffering was to be the lot of the Lord Jesus, in order that ours might be the lot of unmingled blessedness: foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man had not where to lay his head. Disbelieved on by his brethren, who also mocked and aspersed him; slighted if not opposed by other kindred after the flesh; not openly acknowledged or countenanced by any but the poor of the people; and subsisting on the little aid that such could afford to give; it does not appear that the angels were allowed to yield relief to his bodily necessities, or to cheer his human spirit by any perceptible sympathy in his griefs. They, however, furnished him with a continual theme of discourse; so constantly adverted to, indeed, that were no mention made of them in any other part of God's word, we could gather enough from our Lord's incidental allusions to inform us what are their natures,

their employments, their dispositions, and their present and future privileges. It is remarkable how often he dwells upon them as interested spectators of the affairs of this world; and witnesses of what shall hereafter come to pass. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." Luke xii. 8. 9. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his father's, and of the holy angels." Luke ix. 26. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations." Matt. xxv, 31, 32. It would be impossible to reconcile such expressions as these with any ignorance on the part of the heavenly host as to what passes among men; on the contrary it clearly implies that they, having looked upon every transaction in the human family throughout its continuance, will be summoned as witnesses to the exact justice of the final award, when all are gathered together in one vast assemblage, to receive their everlasting doom.

But we must return to the story as regards angelic interpositions, recorded in the narrative of our Lord's personal sojourn on earth. After the close of his combat with the Evil One, we read no more of their appearance, until that most awful scene when, with his soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death, the Redeemer withdrew a little way from his drowsy disciples, and poured out before his Father that prayer which betokened the extreme death of his humiliation, in submitting to endure the mortal anguish of human fear, the fear of approaching death. Far be it from us to follow the example of some who would fain pry into the impenetrable mystery of that hour's suffering! We are told that it was the hour of the powers of darkness; when the prince of this world came to find that he had nothing in the Son of God; when the supplication was wrung from the Redeemer's lip, that if it were possible the cup might pass from him; yet qualified by the submissive addition, "Nevertheless, not my will, but

thine be done." Then it was that "there appeared an angel unto him, from heaven, strengthening him," Luke xxii. 40, and what a mission that angel had!

The mind sinks under this scene; not the bright throng of chariots and horses of fire that surrounded Elisha; not the array of seraphim, seen by Isaiah, giving glory to the Lord of hosts; not the great multitude of the heavenly host who appeared to celebrate his incarnation; not even the party of those who came to minister unto him when Satan had departed; but one single solitary angel appeared, coming direct from heaven, from the immediate presence of God the Father, advancing through the gloom and stillness of night; and for what purpose? to strengthen him from whom all strength is derived! We cannot tell of what nature was the strength conveyed: we have the word, and nothing more; and we know that, notwithstanding the strength thus imparted, "being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke xxii. 44. Of this spectacle the angel was a witness; and a witness he will prove against such as reject the salvation wrought out for them at such a fearful price by the Son of God! We cannot pretend to descant on this heart-piercing scene; we have it, indeed, most clearly set forth for our trembling contemplation, and deeply ought we to ponder it. The Lord of hosts, the King of glory, prostrated on the earth that he created, offering up "prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears," Heb. v. 7, in an agony that wrung a bloody sweat from every pore, while one of the brightest of his creatures, sent from the invisible throne of God, stood by, imparting such strength as he was commissioned to bring, and beholding the sons of men, for whom all this was undergone—unmindful of the repeated admonition to watch and pray, and not even sufficiently alive in their Master's cause, at this extreme point of his distress, to watch with him one hour—slumbering at the distance of a stone's cast. Surely this was the lowest point of the Saviour's humiliation, when he could accept strength from a created angel: and surely it ought also to lay us in the lowest depth of self-accusing shame, that for our

grievous sins and provocations he was so bruised, so put to grief; while not one of the three especially selected out of the chosen twelve, no not even the beloved and loving John had a word of consolation, or a gesture, or a look of sympathy to tender; nor a movement of the heart towards him who could have read its most secret throbs. All were sleeping, sleeping indeed for sorrow, but not with a sorrow like his, who was suffering for them. It seems to endear the holy angels, that one of their number should have been found, seeking to soften that unutterable bitterness of our Master's grief; and to strengthen him, when forsaken of all help, assailed by Satan, and with the keen prophetic anticipation of all the morrow's torments full on his spirit.

But though only one appeared to help him, many were the angelic spectators of that night's agony. We know that Christ was "seen of angels;" and we cannot believe that ever, for one moment of time, were their regards withdrawn from him. There is a remarkable passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians, iii. 9—11, where the Apostle speaks of "the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now under the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he proposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." By these principalities and powers in heavenly places, the angels must necessarily be meant: and the making known to them the manifold wisdom of God by the church, seems no less clearly to imply that the contemplation of the adorable mystery of man's redemption by the incarnation, sufferings, obedience, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, brought a vast accession of the knowledge of the glory of God, even to the highest of created intelligences. To the rebellious, "the wicked spirits in high places," was thereby shown forth in dazzling display, the immensity of the mercy and goodness against which they had irretrievably sinned; and of the wisdom that could devise, and the power that could accomplish the restoration of man from the ruin into which Satan had plunged him, in a way perfectly consistent

with that solemn declaration, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." and with every attribute of the Most High. To the holy angels, who have joy in the presence of God over every sinner that repenteth, how inexpressibly beautiful and glorious must be this work of their Divine Master. Theirs was a privilege to behold him throughout every stage of its arduous progress, and we cannot enter into the deep feeling, the full comprehension, with which they pour forth the everlasting song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" It is marvellous how little some excellent people allow themselves to think about the angels, as connected with this theme: the blank left in their system by the omission of so very rich a part of God's revelation would, at least to us, be a very dreary one. We could not afford to forget that the Lord Jesus in all that he did and suffered for us was watched, marvelled at, and exceedingly glorified by those with whom we look to be hereafter equal, but to whom we are now so immeasurably inferior, that a single individual among them could, with a movement of his powerful arm, depopulate this land; or by the brightness of this appearance, if fully revealed to our sight, turn, as Daniel expressed it, "our comeliness into corruption."

It is impossible to conceive what must have been the emotions with which the angelic host looked on, while the dreadful work proceeded from the moment of our Lord's agony in the garden, to that of his being taken down from the cross. We can hardly read those words, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than ten legions of angels?" without fancying every flaming sword among the listening myriads starting from its sheath, and every countenance blazing with ardour, to receive the command. They had witnessed the detestable act of the mercenary traitor; they had seen Satan enter into him, and lead him to the guilty chief priests, and animate him to grasp with avaricious delight the wretched bribe, a goodly price that they valued Him at, whose is the silver, and whose is the gold, and whose is the round world and all that it contains! and now they beheld the wretched man conducting his midnight band to the gar-

den, the scene of that terrible agony, and that beautiful submission to the Father's will; they beheld him approach and salute his Divine victim; they saw the inconstant Peter, now fully roused from sleep, fighting for him with whom he would not watch; they saw the bands, the cords and fetters, the preparation for such horrors, as surely they could not expect to have beheld their heavenly King subjected to; and they heard those words of conscious power and majesty, in which he named them—*them*, his own loyal, loving angels, as ready to appear to the rescue. Oh, what a blaze would have burst upon that night of black blackness, had not Omnipotence restrained the glowing legions! "But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" added the meek Saviour, and the thought of deliverance was past. Gabriel could not forget his own message to Daniel; the seventy weeks were accomplished, and Messiah must be cut off. Their intimate acquaintance with all that God has revealed, and the sure confidence they have, that whatever he hath spoken shall come to pass, even as he has said it, are to the angels instead of a foreknowledge that no creature may attain to: and if we give the like heed to what God has declared, and with the same simple faith and plain understanding receive it, we should find ourselves far better forewarned than now we are for the changes of this worldly scene, and armed with a more perfect submission to what betides us.

The sad events of that evening in Gethsemane were followed, as we all know, by others more terrible far; and equally in the Jewish sanhedrim, in Pilate's house, and Herod's judgment hall, in the streets of Jerusalem, and on Calvary, was the Lord Jesus "seen of angels." They heard the false witness borne, the infamous sentence given; they saw the scourging, the crowning with a diadem of thorns, the reed placed in that hand, which in its protecting shadow had so long hidden the house of Israel from their foes! They heard the scoffing homage tendered by rude, idolatrous heathen soldiers to Him, whose regal glories filled all heaven with splendour: they saw the heavy cross laid on that shoulder where God has laid the government of all crea-

ted things; and they were constrained to witness the payment of that world's ransom in the trickling drops that oozed from those pierced hands and feet. The rocks were rent, but those awe-struck angels could not if they would, have burst the bonds of obedience to the voice that bade them be still: the sun hid himself, but through the darkness of that unnatural night, the bleeding Lamb of God was still "seen of angels."

Where were the heavenly hosts, while for the appointed time the dead body of Jesus lay in the sepulchre? It was a Jewish sabbath, and it seems to have become a blank in time, because the light of the world was resting in the darkness of the grave. It was passed over—the ordinance transferred to the next glorious morning; and ever since the first day of the week has been the Sabbath of the Christian world.

But now we shall find the holy angels thronging a spot of earth, with all their glowing characteristics developed in a remarkable manner. The suspicious murderers entertained a fear lest their Victim might yet rise again; and they obtained from the Roman governor permission to seal the stone that covered the entrance of the sepulchre, and to set a watch of soldiers over it. The strict discipline of the Roman army made this a most efficient guard; but the debt was now fully cancelled. He who had died for our sins was to rise again for our justification: death had no more dominion over him. Nothing in the Bible is more splendid than the picture presented to the mind by the very brief recital of that glorious event. "And behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." Matt. xxviii. 2, 3. There is something very real in this description—very much opposed to the incorporeality of the angelic host. The act of rolling away the massive stone which the good Joseph of Arimathea had placed as a security against the enemies of that sacred body, and which the high priests had farther made sure, and moreover sealed it,

as a barrier against his friends, and his seating himself upon it, we can hardly believe to have been only in semblance. The angel, the highly-privileged angel, who was sent, or rather who was permitted to rush upon this enrapturing service, seems to have alighted upon earth with a force that made it quiver; and to have rent or spurned from its place the stone that barred the egress of the Lord Jesus from his dark prison. No mortal eye beheld that egress; the countenance of the angel caused the keepers to become as dead men: knowing as they did that any violation of the seal upon the stone would be visited on them with the extreme of punishment, they had no power to resist; they fell prostrate, rendered senseless by terror; and no marvel, seeing what was the aspect of the angel. Our foolish and improper habit of using the most hyperbolic comparisons on ordinary occasions, deprives Scripture of much of its due force. *As quick as lightning, as vivid as lightning*, are expressions in ordinary use among us; and when we read that the angel's countenance was like lightning, we do not perhaps recall one of those terrific flashes or blazes of electric fire, from which the boldest is constrained to avert his eyes; and add to it the highest possible expression of intellectual power. We do not even try to render that small measure of justice which our very imperfect faculties would enable us to yield to the might and majesty of an angelic envoy from Him who maketh his ministers a flaming fire. And we may well believe, that the triumphant joy, the holy indignation, of the angel, who came to open the Lord's sepulchre, would shine forth from his countenance with a most heavenly radiance. The miserable children of the dust had so far been allowed to work their wicked will, and Satan, utterly crushed as his head now was through the assumption of all power, both in heaven and in earth, by his almighty Conqueror, and still, with his inferior spirits, an hour during which they could boast that their conquest over vile man had laid the Lord of life in the grave. Very short, and fearfully embittered was that season of hellish exultation; but it was enough to rouse the keenest emotions in the breast of a celestial spirit; and we may be assured, that when the

longed-for command was issued, and the waiting angel sped his way to the garden of Joseph, the poor, wretched soldiers of Rome engaged but little of his attention, fixed as it must have been on the baffling of the malice of Satan. Not against the miserable sinners of earth, the poor heathen slaves who occupied an assigned post at the sepulchre, did the lightning of his countenance flash forth; but against those hostile legions who had wrought so much wo; against him who, having had the power of death, was now virtually destroyed by the dying of the Lord Jesus.

Although only one angel is named as having executed this commission, we know that many were present. No mortal was found worthy to witness that greatest event that creation ever viewed—the rising of the Son of God from the tomb; but “seen of angels” it unquestionably was; and they seem to have become visible under different circumstances, singly or not, to the individuals who came to the sepulchre. Thus we find that the angel who in the sight of the keepers sat upon the stone which he had just rolled away, was not found there by the women, but, finding the stone rolled away, “and entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way: tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.” Mark xvi. 5—7. Here we read of no lightning, nothing to terrify: the angel's aspect is that of a young man, and his words full of gentleness and peace. He speaks as one intimately acquainted with all that so thrillingly interested them: he refers to what had been spoken to them by their Lord; and Peter, whose heart was still writhing under the conscious guilt of his denial, is particularly named, to assure him of his being still included among the beloved followers of the Lord.

Again, when Mary Magdalen was there alone indulging her grief, “as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sep-

ulchre. and seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." John xx. 11—13. It seems as though the angel, knowing how often our Lord had spoken of his resurrection from the dead, marveled how any one who loved him could weep at the evident fulfilment of that glorious prediction.

During the forty days of our Lord's farther continuance on earth, we may be assured that he was still "seen of angels," who surrounded his path, adoring him, ministering unto him, and eagerly looking forward to the moment when they should escort him to his throne above, with the rejoicing song, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!" Those forty days that intervened between the rising again and the ascension into heaven of the Lord Jesus, were a precious type of the coming time, when earth shall once more enjoy the presence of her heavenly King, and bask in the brightness of his divine glory, while angels tread her peaceful surface, and that which is now but a howling wilderness of sin, shall blossom like a rose, and become as the garden of Eden. May the Lord hasten that day, when his children, no longer buffeted by messengers of Satan, and pining for communion with Him, too often in vain through the abounding of temptations, and the deep knowledge and subtlety of those with whom they must continually wrestle, shall serve him without fear, while dwelling in the presence of his millennial glory!

SECTION VIII.

THE APOSTLES A SPECTACLE TO ANGELS.

It is a remarkable circumstance, that whereas we do not read of any visible interposition of angels in the affairs of men, as ministering spirits, until after the call

of Abraham, and the promise to him of Christ as his seed, or, to the very last, with the single exception of Cornelius the centurion, all to whom we are told they appeared in that capacity, were of Abraham's race. We are fully assured, that to every child of God they render the same offices of love and care as to the ancient people of the Lord; but, together with the Jewish dispensation, under which we include the Church of the circumcision in Judea, up to the final scattering of the people, ended the personal intercourse of angels with the children of men in the flesh; and those concerning whom we are now to speak, were Jews.

When our Lord was about to ascend into heaven, his disciples, true to their national feelings and scriptural expectations, asked him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom unto Israel?" But that period was yet far distant, and he answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which my Father hath put in his own power." Acts i. 6, 7. It was enough that the promise had been given, and that the restoration of the kingdom of Israel was sure; but a militant, not a triumphant church, was that of which they were to be constituted pillars; and they must sow in tears, in humiliations, persecutions, afflictions, and distresses, the great harvest to be reaped when the King should come, and all his saints with him, to that restored kingdom.

The Lord was parted from them; a cloud received him up out of their sight; but they were loath to believe he was indeed gone. Knowing him of a certainty as their Messiah, and also knowing that their Messiah would assuredly be a deliverer, a prince, a ruler, over the Jewish nation in particular, while his dominion should extend throughout the whole earth, they who had now seen the great work of man's redemption perfected, looked for the glorious sequel, of which they knew that a leading sign would be the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. They seem to have expected that he would no longer delay this great consummation, but fulfil now his own and his Father's repeated promise; and the ascension of their Lord left them very desolate, disappointed, perhaps shaken in faith. "They looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went

up;" and from the context we may infer, that their feeling was one of dread and dismay. Can he have forsaken us? Is Israel not to be gathered? will he not even now relent, and return and finish the mighty work? or can it be that we have suffered so many things in vain, and are now left to mourn a hope that has mocked us? must we take up the language of Jeremiah, and say "O, the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof, why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aside to tarry for the night? Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not." Jer. xiv. 8, 9. That their secret thoughts were of this complexion we have every reason to suppose from what follows: "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts i. 10, 11. To gaze after their Lord, to keep their eyes fixed on that spot whither He, their only help in time, their only hope in eternity, was gone, and to contemplate the pathway by which He, their forerunner, had even then entered beyond the veil, to appear in the presence of God for them, was surely natural and seemly: but their feeling was probably so far tinctured with dismay and doubt, as to call forth the gentle remonstrance of these two angels, who lingered behind their fellows to bear a message of consolation to the perplexed disciples, that should be for the encouragement of the Church until the Lord come.

After this we have many instances of the care and diligence with which the angels fulfilled their ministry to the Church in Jerusalem. When the apostles, by their preaching and miracles, had so roused the indignation of the high priest and the Sadducees, that they laid hands on them, and put them in the common prison, "the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison-doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Acts

v. 19, 20. This deliverance was wrought in so quiet a manner, that no one was aware of it until the next day: the doors were shut, and the keepers standing before them when the officers came, who were sent to bring the prisoners before their cruel and unjust judges. Yet even this marked deliverance had no effect on the hardened opposer's of God's word; all, save Gamaliel, were disposed to slay them, and when, by God's providence, that was overruled, they were beaten and threatened, and commanded to speak no more in the name of Jesus. In the beautiful narrative of Stephen, no mention is made of angelic ministry, although we cannot doubt that they surrounded on all sides the heavenward steps of the proto-martyr; but in the persecution that followed his death, we find them actively employed in aiding the spread of the gospel. "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza which is desert." Acts viii. 26. This embassy was for the conversion of the Ethiopian, who was evidently a proselyte to Judaism; but soon another Gentile was to be brought into the fold, a Pagan, and one holding a command that would, of necessity, often render him liable to act as an enemy against the Lord's people. He was, however, a sincere believer in God, as the creator and preserver of men; and He who has said, "Unto him that hath it shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly," was now to be revealed to him, as the Redeemer, the merits of whose all-sufficient sacrifice rendered the prayers and alms of the devout Roman officer acceptable before God. Being in Cesarea, "he saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? and he said unto him, thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter; he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." Acts x. 3-6. Thus, by angelic ministry, were the Gentiles first called into a participation with the chil-

dren of Israel in the rich blessings and privileges of the Gospel.

It is indeed customary to date that event from the visit of the eastern wise men to Bethlehem; but concerning them, Scripture tells us nothing; and it is quite as probable, that they were descendants from some of the scattered tribes as that they were of Gentile origin. Respecting Cornelius, no doubt exists: the summons sent to Peter by the angel's direction, was the immediate cause of breaking down the middle wall of partition; God showed that unto the Gentiles too he had granted repentance unto life; salvation was of the Jews; but through their mercy all nations of the world, "all the families of the earth," were to obtain mercy. Henceforth it was seen, that in *Christ Jesus*, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision. The national promises remain firm, unbroken, unrecalled, and shall be, to their fullest extent, most gloriously fulfilled to the whole house of Jacob; the land of Canaan, the city of Jerusalem, shall be theirs, in full, exclusive, unalienable possession; but every spiritual advantage becomes alike the property of the believer, of whatsoever name, or blood, or nation he be. In *Christ Jesus*, there is neither male nor female: the woman's natural position is still that of subordination: she is commanded to obey, to honour the man, to call him lord, to reverence her husband, and to learn in silence with all subjection; but in *Christ Jesus* her privileges are precisely the same as his: equally a child of God, equally an heir of salvation, equal with the man and with the angels too, in the resurrection from the dead. So with Jew and Gentile; the former has a rank, a headship, a precedence, not to be done away with, as regards present things, only held back from him so long as he withholds his fealty from his promised Messiah; but this is an earthly distinction; and in *Christ Jesus*—that is, in the full participation of all the blessings promised to believers, as there is neither male nor female, so is there neither Jew nor Gentile. The woman does not, on embracing the Gospel, become a man, nor the Gentile a Jew. Much confusion exists, perplexing and misleading good people on this point. The Lord's returning mercy

to Israel will speedily clear it up: but it is very desirable to see it correctly now.

Cornelius, in relating to Peter the cause of his sending for him, says, "A man stood before me in bright clothing." Some supernatural radiancy surrounded the celestial messenger, that even in the light of mid-day so shone as to make the bold soldier afraid. It is a strange and sad proof of our conscious impurity, that it makes us shrink back from what is glorious and lovely, as though it could have no fellowship with us, but must regard us with displeasure. Such was not man's nature when God originally created him; such it will not be when, being saved by faith, he has attained to the resurrection, and put on the glorified body that claims an equality with the angels in heaven.

The next appearance of one of these ministering spirits is on an occasion of surpassing interest. James, the brother of John, had been slain with the sword, and Herod perceiving it pleased the Jews, then, alas! given over to a reprobate mind, proceeded to take Peter also. The experience which they already had of the Apostle's marvellous escapes from persecuting hands, seems to have rendered them very cautious, for no fewer than four quaternions of Roman warriors were considered a sufficient guard for this poor, fettered Galilean fisherman. But all the power of Rome, in that her proudest day, was of no avail against the mighty weapon wielded on the prisoner's behalf; for "prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him." "And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison." Acts xii. 5, 6. The two soldiers, it would seem, were asleep, as well as their captive; and the fetters that bound him were so secured to them that he could not possibly have moved from his place without rousing them. "And behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals: and so he did. And he saith

unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and second wards, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." Acts xii. 7—11. The power of the angelic deliverer, in this instance, is very strikingly set forth; and the tangibility of the whole event is directly opposed to a mere vision. The angel smote Peter on the side to rouse him from sleep; and though the unlocking of the fetters from his hands, and of the great gate of the prison, seems to have been an act of God's sovereign will, without any instrumentality, it is impossible to regard the angel, in this case, as a mere seeming, an incorporeal essence, not seen by the bodily, but the mental or spiritual eyes of the Apostle.

Not long after this, vengeance overtook the cruel tyrant, who had hoped to glut his own and the people's thirst for blood by slaying Peter. We read, "Upon a set day Herod arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost." Acts xii. 21—23. Probably the same angel who delivered Peter, might be commissioned to execute this punishment on the persecutor of the Church; but by whatever hand the judgment came, it was a solemn warning to men; and seeing how the angels rendered praise to the Most High, in the hearing of John, for the appropriateness of his retributive visitation, we may well believe that every spectacle of chastisement inflicted on sinners is a call for renewed thankfulness and praise on the part of the angels who have been kept faithful to their heavenly King, while others fell into guilt and

terrible condemnation. "By the Church," they learn a vast deal that redounds to the glory of God, and to their own encouragement in the path of obedience. When Paul, oppressed by the multitude of trials, wrote those words to the arrogant Church of Corinth puffed up with their gifts—"I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men: we are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised: even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day;" (1 Cor. iv. 9—13,)—when he wrote these words, he described the means by which God was at that time instructing not only the world and the Church, but the angels in heaven. The spectacle of such sufferings, combined with such constancy, patience, zeal, and love, was redounding to the glory of God, who out of the pitiable weakness of frail and fallen humanity, made strong his servants, and provided that his Son who had been "seen of angels," should be so effectually "preached to the Gentiles," that he was believed on in the world. His manifold wisdom was made known even to the principalities of heaven, by rendering the most foolish things of earth sufficient to baffle all the cunning, and to tread under foot all the powers of hell. Angelic ministry was indeed sometimes employed, as if to remind the suffering disciples, how much sympathy existed towards them in the unseen world, when often on earth no man stood by them; but in general the Lord wrought towards them and in them of his own sovereign, direct power; while the angelic host looked on and adored his condescending mercy to the children of the dust.

We have one more instance on record of the actual appearance of an angel to the favoured Apostle of the Gentiles; and that is on an occasion of peril so wild, and destitution so entire, that imagination can

scarcely picture anything beyond it. Paul, having escaped the hands of the Jews at Jerusalem, and endured an imprisonment of more than two years at Cesarea, was at length shipped for Italy, that he might, as the Lord had shown him in a vision, bear witness of Him in Rome also. A tedious voyage, the latter part of which was undertaken against the prophetic warning of Paul, brought them at length into the most imminent danger: they were tossed helplessly on a tempestuous sea, in a great storm of such long continuance, that for fourteen days the mariners had not even found time or spirits to eat, and all were reduced to utter despair, the prisoner Paul stood forth, and after gently rebuking them for despising his former caution, went on, "And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee, wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me." Acts xxvii. 22—25.

With the narrative of this gracious deliverance, and Paul's subsequent abode at Rome, a chained and guarded captive, the inspired history of the early church concludes. Very shortly after this its first age, corruptions crept in, and men were so ready to forge the seal of God's authority for their own vain imaginings, that in the absence of the original stamp, we have no warrant for giving credence to any recorded interposition from above. Such may have been vouchsafed; but if we cannot now invalidate, neither can we authenticate it, and we leave off where the Lord saw good to close the testimony of what is past; we have only to notice what is yet to come.

SECTION IX.

ANGELIC MINISTRATIONS IN THE LAST DAYS.

FOR many hundreds of years our earth has been unvisited by angels, so far as the

testimony of man's bodily senses is concerned; but the same faith by which we know that the worlds were made, that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, assures us that with unremitting care and tenderness, the ministering spirits of heaven minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation; and our daily experience bears testimony that on many an occasion where dangers the most menacing have beset our path, or difficulties the most bewildering have perplexed it, we have had reason to confess with gladness of heart that "the angel of the Lord encampeth about them that fear him, and delivereth them." In how many instances this occurs where we never are conscious of having escaped a perilous, or struck into a safe path in time of danger, through the watchfulness of our unseen friends, we shall perhaps learn when admitted into their happy fellowship forever.

But the time approaches when a great multitude of the heavenly host is again openly to visit earth, attendants on the triumphant state of Him whose lowly birth in a stable once brought to men's ears their hymns of thanksgiving to God. As the end of this dispensation draws nigh, we are taught to expect that the angels will take an exceedingly active part in what is going forward; and, first, we may refer to our Lord's discourses on this subject. In explaining the parable of the tares and the wheat, he says, "The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world: the Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. xiii. 39—42. On another occasion, when speaking not in parables, but in a strain of prophetic description, our Lord also showed the office reserved for the angels in reference to his own people. "And there shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory: and he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trum-

pet, and they shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. xxiv. 30, 31. This "great sound of a trumpet" is also mentioned by St. Paul, 1 Thess. iv. 16. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God." The two-fold office of gathering together the elect, and of gathering out all that do iniquity, is likewise set forth very strongly in the Revelation: "And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Rev. vii. 2, 3. But a more remarkable parallel appears in another part, where the time referred to is evidently the same with that spoken of by our Lord, namely, the end of the present dispensation. We have there a harvest, first of the Lord's elect, then of his enemies. "And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." Rev. xiv. 14—16. This is clearly the gathering in of the wheat—the elect; the Lord's harvest of his redeemed people. What immediately follows corresponds with the destruction of the tares. "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle: and another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire, and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God." Verse 17—19.

Again, while three unclean spirits go forth from the mouths of the dragon, the

beast, and the false prophet, unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, we find it is an angel who loudly summons all the fowls of heaven to gather themselves together to eat the flesh of these rebellious kings, their captains, and their hosts." Rev. xvi. 13, 14; and xix. 17, 18.

From all this we may certainly infer that in every event connected with the final triumph of the church, and discomfiture of her foes, angelic agency will be employed to a very great extent. Even if it were admitted that we must view symbolically what is said of the angels in the mysterious book last quoted, (which we do not admit,) we cannot suppose that our Lord also spoke in a figure. So far from it, the "wheat" and the "tares" and the "reapers" were figurative, but the "children of the kingdom," the "children of the wicked one," and the "angels" were the actual beings referred to under those similitudes. We may quite as reasonably deprive the two former classes of their personal identity as the latter: just as properly take saints and sinners for imaginary beings as angels, as well doubt that the elect shall be finally admitted to glory, and the condemned sent into punishment, as that angels shall be the real instruments employed in conveying both to their respective destinations. If we had nothing else to point to, those few words would settle the question. "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels."*

That the closing scene then, of the present dispensation will be accompanied by

* It is worthy of note, too, as connecting this period of universal activity on the part of the angels with other Scriptures, that no two words can be more different in their signification, than those which our translators have all rendered by the same term "world." In the first instance, "The field is the world;" the Greek word expresses distinctly this terraqueous globe, the material, visible earth in which we live; but in the latter clause where we find it translated "The harvest is the end of the world," in the original it is "the completion of the age," *zōon*, the world, has no affinity whatever with *aiōn*, the age: and not only here, but in all parallel passages we find the same event, i. e., the great harvest of the Lord, the day of his coming, spoken of by the term *aiōn*, proving that a great crisis in the order of things, not the destruction of the earth, is pointed at.

a visible display of the hosts in heaven in great numbers, we can hardly doubt; those whom our Lord, then seated on the throne of his glory, shall confess or deny "before the holy angels," will certainly see those witnesses of their doom; and during the tremendous events that usher in this judgment, while Satan and his legions are using every possible device to stimulate the rebellious bearing of hardened sinners, to confirm the doubtful in their unbelief, and to deceive the elect, these powerful and beneficent spirits, acting under an immediate command from their gracious King, will indeed encamp around his people. We may comprehend in some measure the necessity of such a constant guard in our present comparatively safe and easy state, and take comfort in knowing that so it is with us, if we truly love the Lord; but how unspeakably precious will then be the thought of his having given his angels charge concerning us, to keep us in all our ways, when earthquakes and storms, signs and wonders, false Christs and false prophets abound, to terrify or mislead us! Many a defenceless child of God, finding himself, like Elisha in Dothan, accompanied by foes too numerous and too strong for him to contend against, will take comfort from knowing, and perhaps on some occasions, seeing that chariots and horses of fire, and flaming swords wielded by hands of angelic strength, are arrayed on his side. When Satan puts forth his utmost might in the rage of a last, despairing struggle, against the Lord his conqueror, and the little flock that are about to bruise the great enemy under their feet, we may be assured that the zeal of "God's host" will be roused, and their love inflamed in a proportionate degree, contemplating as they will do, the manifold wisdom of God in the dangers, deliverances and final glory of his church, while they execute the gracious purposes of his tender compassion towards the poor sheep of his pasture, appointed by wicked spirits and evil men, to be slain. It is, indeed, an overwhelming thought, what the aspect of this world will be, when, for a season, the restraint is taken off that now holds the wills of fierce and crude men within bounds; when the heathen, that is, all who are not Christ's, rage, and their kings and rulers

conspire together to cast off the government of the Most High, and to root out his dominion from the earth, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." For the elect's sake they will be shortened, and the harvest will be brought in more quickly than men expect; but under what circumstances will the angels divide and gather out the good seed from among the tares of the field? We know how Lot and his family were rescued from Sodom; we know how Noah and his household were shut into the ark, ere the waters of the flood lifted it up from the earth; and we know, though not from the page of inspiration, how the Christians were delivered from Jerusalem's dreadful destruction, by a temporary movement of the besieging army, who never dreamed of assisting them, but who thereby enabled them to flee to a place of safety. An ark, a Zoar, a pillar, there will always be to shelter that church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; and the Lord will send such guidance that his poor trembling flock of way-farers, "though fools, shall not err therein."

But it is when the Lord shall personally come again, in like manner as his disciples saw him go up into heaven, that the innumerable company of angels will be revealed. Such is the declaration: "The Lord himself shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. Then shall the splendid imagery of the Psalms and prophetic writings be fulfilled, and much more than fulfilled; for what language, even of inspiration, can convey to our weak and darkened minds any realizing idea of those things of which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, the terrible magnificence? One angel, described only as "a man in bright clothing," made the bold and pious Roman centurion afraid; another by the exhibition of his angelic knowledge and love so overpowered the mind of the holy John, that he would have offered him worship, due to God alone. What then must be the full display of all that is dazzling in the Lord's triumphant hosts, when thousands of thousands shall stand before him, and

ten thousand times ten thousand minister unto him? Their lively interest in all that concerns us, a race of creatures infinitely every way inferior to them, save only through the high exaltation of our nature by its union with Deity in the person of Christ, and the heavenly privileges thereby secured to his believing people, is matter of wonder; and whether they swell the chorus of praise over the ruins of the great harlot city, Rome, or spread the joyous tidings that Jerusalem is rebuilt, and again inhabited by her long lost children; or hover round the heavenly city itself, the abode of those who have attained to the resurrection from the dead, with that song of angelic sympathy, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come," we shall be obliged to confess that they, respecting whom we have been accustomed to think so little; who have been watching the progress of all that regards us with unwearied diligence, and un failing care, and whose loudest song of praise to their eternal King hails him the Lamb that was slain—slain for *our* redemption,—have such a claim on our love and gratitude, as can never be properly estimated, until, seeing our Lord as He is, we also see them as they are, and remember how incessantly, how willingly, they ministered to us, through the long years of our unsteady, perverse, inconsistent course; contending with our foes, keeping guard over our steps, and finally thronging to welcome us to a full participation in all the glories of their own heavenly home.

This refers to the final period of the present dispensation, when we expect that He who is gone to receive for himself a kingdom will return to establish it on earth. There has, however, been a spiritual coming of the Lord Jesus to his people from the beginning, while the call to enter into the eternal world has successively reached them. When a believer departs to be with Christ, he becomes a resident in the celestial Jerusalem, entering into the peaceful rest of heaven, where Christ also sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty on high, there to abide, until with all the other saints, he is summoned to attend his Lord, and to be re-united to the body which he once left below. In this transition of the departing soul, it is cer-

tain the angels are always present not merely as spectators, but as most active messengers of Christ. It is difficult to speak of the state in which a disembodied spirit finds itself, on launching into eternity: it is one of those things which every one is certain to know by experience, but which none can foreknow by any effort either of wisdom or knowledge, or the most vivid imagination. The separate existence of souls, of every soul of every human being, from Adam to the last of his posterity who shall taste death, is not even questionable by any who believe in the revelation of God; and that all who have already lived and died, are now in companionship either with angels or devils, awaiting the resurrection of the body, either to life or damnation, is also very plainly set forth in Scripture. To Abraham's bosom, to the rest and happiness enjoyed by faithful Abraham, the angels bore Lazarus; while the rich man, we are distinctly told, went to hell; and what is most remarkable, the angel who showed John the wonderful things related in the Apocalypse, so identified himself with the prophets, and other obedient servants of Christ, as almost to do away the distinction between an angel and a glorified saint. Nor is this a solitary instance: our Lord, speaking of the claim that little children have on the tenderness and care of Christians, says, "I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. xviii. 10. And when the damsel who went to hearken at the gate affirmed that she had seen Peter there, the other disciples, assured that he was either imprisoned in fetters or slaughtered, explained it, saying, "It is his angel." Many ingenious theories have been started on this ground; but when all has been said that man can say, we are authorized only to receive what bears upon it the infallible and indelible stamp of truth, "Thus saith the Lord."

That in heaven the spirits of justified men abide with angels, is quite indubitable on Scripture ground; but we are also warranted to believe that they enjoy, occasionally at least, the angelic privilege of visiting earth, or of beholding clearly what goes on in the militant church. Otherwise, how could the souls under the

altar know that their blood was not yet avenged on them that dwell on the earth? And why, if forever divorced from all the ties of mortality, should they express impatience for the arrival of that time? Assuredly not from any vengeful feeling: such is forbidden in just men in the flesh, and cannot reside in the spirits of just men made perfect. Besides, the generation on whom their blood was to be avenged, was probably not the same as the generation who shed it. We can only understand it as expressing a fervent desire for the speedy arrival of that day of vengeance which we know synchronizes with the year of the redeemed. Those souls benighted and mourned over the desolate state of the Lord's still persecuted Church; the devoted little flock to which they also belonged; and knowing that He would at once put all enemies under his feet, and exalt his Church to glory and everlasting peace, they pleaded for the hastening of that promised day.

Another instance, of which it cannot be said that it was figurative, as may be objected to the foregoing, is the appearance of Moses and Elias on the mount with our Lord, in glorified bodies. Elias, indeed, did not die; he took his own body with him; but Moses died and was buried, though of his sepulchre no man knoweth to this day. Whether the body in which he then appeared was his own, raised again from death and the grave for a special purpose, or whether it was what the disciples meant when they talked of Peter's "angel," we cannot possibly tell. This we know, the person was Moses, who had been dead for many generations, and he talked with our Lord, as also did Elias, concerning his decease, which he should accomplish in Jerusalem. They spoke of a coming event; of the locality assigned to it in the purposes of God; and, eminent as were these two lights of the Old Testament church, we have no pretence for supposing that what was clearly revealed to, and perfectly understood by them, in the state of blessedness to which they had attained, was concealed from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob; from Noah, Daniel, and Job; or from any who had, by the like precious faith, entered the presence of God; with whom is no respect of persons, and who often maketh the first last, and the last first.

This may seem somewhat irrelevant to the precise matter before us; but the connexion is very intimate. To every individual among the great multitude before the throne, have the angels of God been ministering spirits; and seeing that the privilege of believers in the life to come is to be made like unto the angels, to be equal with the angels, and that "those also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him," when "the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father, and of the holy angels," we are sure the departed saints shall with the angels bear a very conspicuous part in the proceedings of that day; but we have a striking indication that they will not descend to earth as strangers long divorced from all its concerns, but as those who have like the ministering angels, with keen interest watched the progress of the church below toward the final consummation of all its hopes.

The apostle Paul, after enumerating many of those who by faith obtained the heavenly inheritance, includes in the same company all who had borne testimony during their lives to the truth, and staid themselves on the promises of God. He then shows that they had not yet obtained the promises to which all looked forward, but were kept waiting for us; that is for the whole multitude of them which shall be saved. He speaks of them in their present state as a great cloud of witnesses encompassing us; and points to the circumstance as calculated to quicken us in "the race set before us," the same race wherein they also strove, and succeeded. As too often happens, the force of this beautiful passage is greatly weakened by the injudicious division into chapters of what was written continuously: but a little attention bestowed on these two chapters without any regard paid to such arbitrary disjointing, will present in a very glorious light the perfect union and uninterrupted communion of the whole body of the elect, from the time of Abel to the last period—the removing of those things that may be shaken, and the final establishment of the kingdom that cannot be moved. It is very remarkable, that he does not say to believers still in the flesh. Ye shall come, but, "Ye ARE come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to

an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Heb. xii. 22—24. By faith the child of God enters into this community, embracing all that is of God, both in heaven and on earth; and when he puts off his tabernacle of flesh, it is not to lose sight of what he has hitherto beheld, and to open his eyes on a different scene, but to take in all that before he saw not, in addition to that which he has already seen. Having passed the waves of this troublesome world, and obtained a sure footing on the heavenly shore, he does not in selfish contentment turn his back upon his former companions, still struggling through the surge, but with deep interest contemplate their painful progress, and if so the Lord permit, joyfully unite with the ministering spirits who are commissioned to render such help as divine wisdom sees good, by their instrumentality to impart. This, carried a little way beyond what revelation sanctions, leads to perilous idolatry; and so we find it was, even in the apostles' days; but what then? If some of the unlearned and unstable wrest certain Scriptures to their own destruction, are we, therefore, to shrink from receiving the whole word of God? There is no doctrine so wholesome, so pure, so essentially necessary to be believed, that by overstepping its prescribed bounds it may not be wrested to a fearful error, and some who will not entertain this exceedingly important and unspeakably encouraging subject of angelic ministry, and the communion of saints, lest it lead them into unsafe paths, will dogmatize on the origin of evil, free-will, and the secret counsels of the Most High, until they totter on the extreme verge of most presumptuous sin. John's mistake is recorded for our warning, and the angel's gentle rebuke for our instruction; and with these before him, what has the humble worshipper of God to fear from an attentive, thankful investigation of this lovely portion of the divine economy of grace?

SECTION X.

ANGELIC TRIUMPH.

We have now to survey what is made known on the subject of angelic triumph, when the final overthrow of all that impeded the universal extension of Christ's kingdom on earth, shall have terminated this dispensation; and here indeed we trace the beautiful union once before displayed in their heavenly chorus, of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men!" The twenty-fourth Psalm contains a sublime foretaste of what we look for, while describing that glorious scene, the ascension of the Lord Jesus on high, leading captivity captive. There, the heralding angels cry, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." Those from within the gates inquire, "Who is this King of glory?" Not that they needed to be told; no, they knew the Babe of Bethlehem, who from his lowly birth had been "seen of angels," of all the angels of God, and well were they prepared to celebrate his return to the glory which he had with the Father before the world was: but they loved to draw forth the answering shout, ascriptive of praise to their God, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle."

And again the summons is sounded from those majestic and resplendent legions, advancing as they sing, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." The shining multitude, the seraphim, the cherubim, who throng around those eternal gates, and perchance the spirits of the faithful resting there, once more demand, "Who is this King of glory?" and once more the thundering song peals out, "The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of glory." It is wonderful how habit familiarizes the human mind to what is calculated to overpower it. The grandeur of this passage, the imagery that it teems with is such, that man's lip might well falter in appropriating the lofty strain, and his knee bow in unpremeditated adoration of the ascended King of glory; but we hear it until

we can scarcely bestow a thought on its surpassing splendour; and yet in the pride of our cold, unthankful hearts, affect to look down upon the glowing creatures who cease not day or night audibly to pour forth the ardent devotion of theirs before the throne, as though their rank were somewhat below ours. But the proudest heart will be humbled, and the coldest kindled into flame, when that awful hour arrives for the seventh angel to sound, and great voices in heaven proclaim, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever:" when the Church in glory, that so long awaited the day of vengeance, the year of the redeemed, takes up the strain and says in prostrate adoration, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." When a voice shall come out of the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great," and the call shall be responded to by the myriads of the holy angels, the innumerable multitude of ransomed souls, the whole company of that rejoicing heaven and renovated earth, bursting forth, "the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Allelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

That hour will come: and in the body, or out of the body, every soul of man shall witness its coming. How near it may be, we know not, but far distant it cannot be. A veil, the veil of our own darkened understandings, as yet conceals from us the glory that shall be revealed: and neither angel nor devil shall longer be invisible to our awe-struck gaze. The latter will pass into their fiery prison, and Satan will be cast fettered into his dungeon, and while heaven pours forth its dazzling legions, earth will be purified from all things that offend.

When John saw the multitude arrayed in white robes, with palms in their hands, standing before the throne, and heard them loudly ascribe salvation to God and to the Lamb, he saw all the angels fall upon their faces, and worship God, as *their* God. Wherever a note of praise is

uttered by the Church, it awakes an echo throughout the untold legions of heaven. This sympathy will never cease; and with what delight God's angels contemplate the approaching triumph of their glorious King, we are told in many ways. That magnificent strain of holy exultation, descriptive of the final ruin of the great harlot city of Rome, is repeated as being uttered by a voice from heaven; probably of an angel also, for it is called another voice from heaven, immediately following that of an angel having great power, and lightening the earth with his glory, who cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." It was an angel also, one of the seven who had poured forth the seven last plagues on the earth, who showed to John the heavenly city, guarded at its twelve gates, by the same number of angels.

Here we may pause, to consider for a moment what is meant by this mysterious city! It is often named in Scripture, as a place actually existing, but not on earth. Paul speaks of it to the Galatians, in direct contradistinction from the earthly Zion; "Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children;" and "Jerusalem which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all." Gal. iv. 25, 26. It is difficult to conceive how, while one is indisputably a real, and existing, a material city, the other should be a visionary thing, a mere name; or, that while Hagar is represented as the figure of a reality, Mount Sinai in Arabia, and that again of another reality, Jerusalem in Palestine, Sarah should only be the figure of a figure which has no substantial antitype. Again, in Heb. xii., he names it the city of the living God; the heavenly Jerusalem: and John, in Rev. xxi. says the angel "carried me away in the Spirit, to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Our Lord also distinctly mentions it: "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God." Rev. iii. 12. Though not so plainly named, this Jerusalem is clearly intended also by Paul, when he says, Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose

builder and maker is God." Heb. xi. 10. And again, "God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. xi. 16. In the beautiful discourse addressed by the Lord Jesus to his disciples, immediately before his betrayal, he says, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John xiv. 2, 3. Paul too says, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens: for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. Is not this the "holy Jerusalem" which John saw? The name imports "peace;" or rather, it imports "where peace is seen:" and there is no question, among spiritual people, as to the fact of this new Jerusalem being the heavenly home of God's people; but one very great discrepancy seems to exist between God's revelation and man's expectation: the latter expects to bid an eternal farewell to earth, and to go to a place called heaven, somewhere in a vastly remote space, where all that he shall find will be totally dissimilar from aught that he has ever seen or heard of; where he will be an etherealized, unsubstantial creature among beings and things equally removed from all with which we are now conversant. Revelation, on the contrary, tells us of "a city," of "mansions," of foundations, walls, and gates, indescribably rich, bright, and glorious indeed, but still answerable in some measure to what we are accustomed to; and it invariably speaks of this heavenly abode as coming down, at the appointed time, to the region of our earth. Paul speaks of being "clothed upon with an house which is from," not in "heaven:" our Lord says, "I will come, and receive you unto myself;" and the more minutely we inspect the Scriptures that bear upon the subject, the more we shall be struck by their harmonious bearing on the point.

It is a point in which every individual is personally concerned; and we may, without committing any presumptuous

sin, examine, each for himself, what God hath seen fit to reveal to all. We must remember that our Lord Jesus Christ took to himself a body which saw no corruption; that, in the same body with which he arose from the dead, and the identity of which he proved to Thomas, he ascended into heaven, and shall come again to judgment. Two of his people, Enoch and Elijah, also went to that unseen place in their material bodies; and at the crucifixion of our Lord "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Matt. xxvii. 51—53. Now it is perfectly natural and allowable to ask, where are all these bodies? Changed, no doubt; their corruption having put on incorruption, and their mortal immortality, and made glorious, as was seen in Moses and Elias on the Mount; but still the same bodies that they wore when on earth. And if in the Bible we find a satisfactory answer to that question, by being told of a glorious place, a city, a habitation, prepared and reserved for God's children, and in due time to be revealed, not only to them, but to all others, though no others shall ever find entrance into it, surely we may be allowed to take, in a more literal sense, the declarations so often repeated than that which good men have been in the habit of connecting with them.

In all humility, then, we proclaim our belief, founded on many passages in the Bible, that a place, a real locality exists, far beyond the present scope of our vision, but not necessarily invisible to mortal eye; that to this place the glowing description given by John in the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation belongs: that it is the present abode of the Lord Jesus Christ, in his human body, and of those named in a passage more than once already quoted, an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and Church of the first-born, the spirits of just men made perfect, and the bodies of such as have heretofore, for some special purpose, been raised from the dead.

We believe that into this abode flesh and blood, in its unchanged state, shall

not enter, but that it will, during the millennial period of the Church's peace and Satan's imprisonment, be fully visible to men upon the earth, among whom its happy inhabitants will have full freedom to intermingle, by the same facilities that placed Moses and Elias on the Mount, and brought the holy angels so often into companionship with man. We do believe that in this heavenly Jerusalem no distinction whatever subsists between Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free; all being one in Christ Jesus, and like, and equal unto, the angels; while in the earthly Jerusalem we certainly believe that the children of Abraham, according to the flesh, shall dwell under the acknowledged rule of their Messiah, possessed of every privilege that can belong to the citizens of the world's metropolis; and invested with such honours and advantages as never yet were by any nation enjoyed. We believe that by a peculiar dispensation, frequently alluded to by our Lord and by the inspired writers, a subordinate rule under Christ, will be exercised by the saints of the Church triumphant over the church still on earth; while an intercourse no less frequent than are now the visits of those unseen ministering spirits, who have the charge over us to keep us in all our ways, will subsist between those who are, and those who are not yet perfected in heavenly felicity. This view necessarily brings the holy angels forward as partaking richly in the triumphant glories of Christ's reign: they will have gathered out the tares, gathered in the wheat, and have seen their rebellious fellows who kept not their first estate, consigned to the abyss from whence they will no more escape; or if permitted to share the short season of Satan's enlargement, and to aid in deceiving those whom he will finally assail, they will speedily be cast into the fiery pit forever. We are told that at the final judgment of all men, which follows this last outburst of Satanic malignity, the earth and its heaven shall flee away, and no more place be found for them; but the holy Jerusalem is imperishable: it is a building of God, eternal in those heavens with which our globe has no necessary connexion. There, without a pause, the songs of the redeemed shall ascend; there, without a night, the day of

peace and joy shall endure; there at the gates, the "everlasting doors," angelic guards shall hold their safe and pleasant post, evermore employed in the service of their glorious King. Blindly erring as now we do, in vain attempts fully to comprehend what it will require, new and enlarged faculties to take in, even when the things now unseen are displayed to our sight, we shall then see clearly, and know even as we are known.

There is a practical application of this high and holy subject, the realities of the spiritual world, both angelic and Satanic, that must not be overlooked. No action of our lives, nothing that we can do or say, is unconnected with the two classes into which those spiritual beings are divided. It fearfully aggravates sin to commit it, as we do, in the presence of those whom the Lord has commissioned to watch over and to minister unto us, and who cannot but be very jealous for their divine Master's honour; and in the presence too of those apostates who delight in our transgressions, because they dishonour God. how circumspectly should we walk, in many a case where now our ways are most inconsistent and perverse, if we could see the pure, bright, searching eye of a holy angel intently fixed on us, with a desire to mark how the Christian glorifies his Master; or if we caught the exulting leer of a devil, tracing out our crooked ways, or turned in mockery and scorn to the record of God's will, which we profess to follow, but from which we so perpetually swerve! Both might address us in the same language, and ask, the one in sorrowful reproach, the other in grinning exultation, "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" that friend who has done all for us, even to the sacrifice of himself, for our redemption; and who has given such large supplies of grace, and such unlimited promises of help, that we may walk worthy our high calling, and enable him to present his church to God, holy and without blemish, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. To spot it, to wrinkle it, to pollute it, is the unceasing aim of Satan and his crew, while no created being can lend the smallest aid to stay the workings of sin, to palliate it when committed, or to supply a particle of help towards canceling this debt. There is no moment of our

lives when we are perfectly secure from the approach of evil spirits; and though the Lord himself is ever present with his people, and his presence is all-sufficient to protect and to sustain them, yet we have clear intimations, as has been shown in these pages, that against those who would harm us an adverse armament is arrayed, watchful, zealous, and filled with holy love and tender compassion for the feeble children of men. It is sweet to be able to say, by faith, what Paul said from actual right, on occasions of imminent danger and deliverance: "There stood by me the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve." It does not derogate from the omnipotence or the omniscience of the Most High, while it exceedingly enhances his gracious care for both parties, that he should depute his bright angels to render loving service to his people. On their part, we may be assured, it forms a very endearing tie; and it is strange that we, who are the great gainers, should be so utterly indifferent to the revealed fact, as to pass weeks, months, and some perhaps years, without bestowing a thankful thought on the matter.

Our notions of an earthly monarch's greatness are enlarged by observing that his sway extends over a multitude of subjects; and that he has under his command an exceedingly numerous, formidable, obedient, and beautifully disciplined army, so ordered as to hold effectually at bay a no less numerous hostile force, perpetually menacing his dominions. Nebuchadnezzar, himself a great king and conqueror, understood this; and how striking is the reference he makes to that peculiar feature in the majesty of the divine government! "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" Our views on this subject are rarely so enlarged as those of the Chaldean king. To judge by the tenour of religious books, and ministerial discourses in general, very little praise is rendered to God for revealing to us this branch of the glory of his kingdom. We use in our public worship that exceedingly beautiful and most scriptural hymn, the *Te Deum*; and fluently recite, "To thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein; to

thee, cherubim and seraphim continually do cry, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth!" What a scene would open to our mental and spiritual view every time we utter these words, if we had habitually paid due attention to what the Lord God of Sabaoth,—of hosts, or armies,—has vouchsafed to show us in his word! If all the imagery which we are so slow to remark was deduced from the Psalms of David, we should scarcely recognise them, so altered, so impoverished would they become; and instead of thrusting his precious doctrine into the shade, we should do well to bring it very prominently forward, even at the expense of some topics which usually occupy a large share of attention, and which do but gender needless strife. We all, occasionally, are compelled to cry, Our soul cleaveth to the dust, and to ask for quickening grace, according to God's word; but we make too little use of some of the means which that word supplies for contemplations of a most elevating character. If God's angels took no more thought for us than we do for them, we should go stumbling about the world in a very uncomfortable manner.

With some it is a favourite plan to place the angels in a position vastly subordinate, or at best inferior to that of the saints. Yet when our Lord took upon him our nature, even the sinless nature, wholly exempt from Adam's rebellious taint, he is said to have been made a little lower than the angels. Paul, reproving the Corinthians for going to law before the unjust, and not before the saints, reminds them that by the saints the world shall be judged; and adds, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. vi. 3. This seems evidently to refer to the judgment of condemnation, the "judgment of the great day," mentioned by Jude, unto which the angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, are reserved. It does not warrant the assumption that God will make over to his saints the government of his angels. Another ground for this supposed exaltation over the heavenly host is alleged by some to be the closer proximity of the saints to the throne, as seen by John, where the angels are described as forming the outermost circle, (Rev. v. 11,) but surely this does not argue anything. The

officials who guard the king's palace are often of much higher rank than those admitted to the presence-chamber. Our Lord has distinctly said of his glorified saints, "They are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Luke xx. 36. With the prospect of such glorious equality, well may the sinful worms of earth rest thankfully contented. The angels are ministering spirits; and their Master and ours came also "to minister." It is well to note these things: men are apt to adopt, without sufficient consideration, the notions of those who have perhaps borrowed from preceding writers, and amongst them framed systems in which the plain word of Scripture is less prominent than are their own glosses upon it.

But whatever discoveries are reserved for the period when we shall know even as we are known, the present is a time to make use of what God has distinctly declared to us. We are in the world; in that field where the devil is now plentifully sowing, and carefully fostering his tares, for the twofold purpose of diminishing the Lord's harvest, and heaping up fuel for the unquenchable flames, in which the only solace of his own torments will be the sight of myriads suffering with him. His great seed-time is while men sleep: they will awake but to find the strong hands of God's angels binding the weeds for their final doom. This is a solemn thought for those who are appointed to watch the field; for kings, and persons in authority; for bishops, and ministers of religion; for parents, and the heads of every household; for all, in fact, to whom is committed the oversight of any fellow-creature. When they slumber at their posts, the enemy steals along, and injures their master's property, for which they must give account to him.

Another point where Satan must be met and resisted is chiefly personal; each individual must look to himself. The seed of the word being sown by the great Husbandman, the devil is sure to come and endeavour to take it away, ere it can sink and be rooted in their hearts. He knows how needful is prayer, with meditation, to render effectual that precious seed; and by a multitude of devices, he

will seek to divert the mind from such indispensable exercise. In this quarter the angels cannot oppose him; they are not authorized to interfere, nor permitted to bear a part in the mighty work of man's regeneration, conversion, sanctification: there God alone operates. Jesus is the author and the finisher, and only on him can the soul lean for help against the mighty. The wisest and most faithful of God's servants cannot always discern a blade of wheat from a tare: they are told both must grow together until the harvest; lest in attempting to root out the weeds they pull up the good plants also; the reapers, with whom is discernment for the task, will come forth at the appointed time, and effect the separation, but though they can gather in the whole harvest without letting fall a single ripe grain, still they have nothing to do with the seed-time, or with the secret growth of the plant. They cannot hinder the choking of the word by worldly cares and pleasures; they cannot cause that to take root which falls where no depth of spiritual susceptibility exists; they cannot wrest from Satan's grasp what he has snatched away from the heedless hearer; nor can they impart fertility to the heart of man, that it should so receive and retain as to bring forth fruit. So wonderfully has our gracious Lord guarded this and every other doctrine from abuse, that no humble, believing hearer need fear for a moment to be led into error by conceding to the subject of these imperfect pages that prominence to which it is entitled, as occupying a very important place in the revelations of God.

We sometimes have the counsel gravely given to leave these things to learned men as being too high for simple minds. The seventy disciples whom our Lord sent forth, we are told, returned to him with joy, because even the very devils were subject unto them through his name. They were simple, unlearned people, who, fully believing all that he had said, instead of setting down to hold a learned disquisition on the nature of evil spirits, went and acted upon what he told them, commanding the devils in his name. He answers their glad communication by telling them that he beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven; he invested them

with unlimited controul over "all the power of the enemy," and, after cautioning them not to rejoice so much in this supernatural gift as in the knowledge that their own names were written in heaven, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Luke x. 21. With this encouragement before us, with a perfect consciousness of being a mere babe in worldly wisdom and worldly prudence, and simply believing that every word spoken of God is true, we have fulfilled our task; may it be as profitable to the soul of the reader, as the writer feels it has been to her own, while with the Bible, and nothing but the Bible, to guide her, she has endeavoured to trace the outlines of what can never be perfectly filled up, until the veil of mortality is withdrawn, which now withholds our eyes from contemplating in all its wondrous details, the mysterious world of spirits.

CONCLUSION

"WATCH."

"DELIVER us from the evil one," is the prayer which our Lord has instructed us to put up; and it is much to be regretted, that we are accustomed to use a different form of expression, calculated to withdraw our attention from the great personal adversary, and to present to our minds a vague notion of evil in general. Whatever isolates man, separating between him and the rest of God's creation, is inimical to his best interests. He looks on the inferior animals, and forgetting in how many respects their natural sensibilities resemble his own, he becomes their cruel oppressor. He dooms them to protracted hunger and thirst; he overworks them, until every sinew of their exhausted frames is wrung by the anguish of intolerable fatigue; he breaks the endearing ties by which the Lord of all has seen good to sweeten their humble existence; and standing on a haughty emi-

nence of superior intellect and conscious immortality, he degrades some of the most marvellous of God's works, using them as mere tools for the supply of his artificial wants, the gratification of his avaricious propensities; until the whole creation, groaning and travailing in pain together, sends up a fearful cry into the ears of Him who from the glorious high throne of his eternal Majesty stoops to feed the young ravens that call upon him. Man was placed in dominion over the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, that he might exercise a becoming vicegerency, brethren as they all are of the dust out of which his own body is so curiously formed; but Satan fills his mind with pride and hardens his heart against the pleadings of natural feeling on behalf of those who have no voice to utter in their own cause; and so, man, standing superciliously aloof from the creatures that his sin has subjected to vanity, works the work of devils in conniving at, if not wantonly inflicting, needless torments upon them.

Again, as below, so above his own scale of being there are races with which he is nearly affianced: not corporeally as here, but spiritually. These he cannot see, therefore he resolves to banish their existence from his thoughts. He is aware that of such superior creatures one class is ever about him for good, the other for evil; but what little he may have incidentally gathered on that subject he heeds not: and as to inquiry, he considers it a worthier employment to explode the depths of the earth for the fossil remains of some extinct species of animals, which had he met with it alive he would probably have hunted to death for his barbarous sport, than to seek a clearer knowledge of those beings among whom he must, assuredly and inevitably, dwell to eternity. Such insolation, we repeat, is most injurious to man: God never intended it for him. The record of creation, the repeated injunctions to mercy, and the beautiful provision made for its exercise under the glorious code of Israel's law, all declare on the one hand, as do on the other the many revelations given of angelic ministry and of Satanic malice, that man is not authorized to lose sight of his actual position as a link in the chain of created being.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation," said our blessed Lord. Against what were they to watch? He had apprized them long before, when he had taught them to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," and had also put into their mouths a plea for being thus guarded, thus delivered: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." The evil one seeks to usurp God's kingdom within us, to stir us up in resistance to His power, and by our rebellion, our ungrateful, unblushing scorn of His pure law, to tarnish the glory that rests upon His Church. We pray that Satan may not succeed in so seducing us into the robbery of God; we pray to be delivered from his wiles; and our prayer is accepted, if it be offered up in sincerity, the heart accompanying the lips, and with a willingness on our part to watch against the approach of that from which we have prayed to be preserved.

When the Christian, in pursuit of his lawful calling, finds himself entering those ways where the ungodly take council, and sinners walk, and scorers fix their seat, he knows that he must watch, and feels that he must pray. Temptation will surely then assail him; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, will each find its suitable incitement prepared: the fear of man will bring one snare, the love of man another; and he has no difficulty in realizing the presiding presence of Satan and his angels in the haunts of mammon or among the splendours of earthly pomp, or where contending parties strive for mastery in the field of worldly distinction. He does not love such scenes, but duty calls him into them, and he goes softly, humbled in spirit, wary in mind, taking heed lest, amid the abundance of stumbling-blocks, he should fall. Thus the six days of labour pass, and how joyful is the Sabbath dawn releasing him from such necessary exposure to temptation. He thinks, perhaps, with a sigh of compassionate sorrow of those who, turning the grace of God into licentiousness, will certainly keep a Sabbath to Satan, and use the day of release from worldly business as an especial opportunity for sinning greedily in other ways than those of covetousness and strife; but he goes

himself to the house of prayer, under a delightful conviction that in seeking the sanctuary of God he flies from the presence of all his foes.

And so he does; but alas! God has as yet no sanctuary on earth into which those foes cannot enter. There is nothing in consecrated walls to repel them; nor is the most devotional frame of mind that man can bring himself into, a safeguard against their near approach. Rather does our conscientiousness of being on hallowed ground, and its attendant feeling of security, encourage the wily foe to do his boldest and his worst, where two or three are gathered together, with Christ Himself in the midst, there stands Satan, or some trusty emissary of his, at their right hand, to resist them. We are not left to conjecture whether it be so or not; our Lord distinctly expresses it, when explaining the parable of the sower: "Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." Matt. viii. 12. This, indeed, refers to a case where no true faith exists; but it proves that when the word is preached, Satan is at hand to render it of no effect; and where is the Christian who has never realized the presence, even in the hour of real communion with God, of something over which he has had to mourn as being sadly opposed to that perfect spirituality of mind, that joy and peace in believing, which he knows he ought to attain unto?

We do not rightly estimate the enormous power of the enemy at those times and in those places where he may be considered as suffering an effectual check. A man may know "the plague of his own heart," but he will gain very little in his efforts to subdue it, if he thinks he has that alone to strive against. It is the Devil whom we are told to resist; and if half the prayers that we put up against the evil of our nature, were directed against him, personally and by name, we should soon experience a relief that is now more hardly and more partially obtained. Inquiry into the character and extent of Satanic power, however successful, is nothing without a vigorous application of the knowledge gained to our individual case: it is to reconnoiter an enemy whom we do not intend to fight; and who laughs at the

pointing of our telescopes, if not followed up by the pointing of our guns.

There are some who will be constrained to acknowledge, that the surest signal for distress and annoyance in every shape is the attempt to commence or to prosecute some really good work; that so long as they give their attention to comparative trifles, or occupy themselves in a way productive of no particular advantage, in spiritual things, to themselves or others, they go on with tolerable ease and comfort: but let them attempt an aggressive movement on the Lord's side, and every thing is against them. There is no hindrance so great or so trivial, from the fracture of a limb to the mislaying or soiling of a sheet of paper, but it crosses their path; no suggestion, from that which leads to most sinful anger, or rebellious murmuring, or dishonouring doubt of God's faithfulness, down to the silliest fancy that can attract the moment's thought, but it will come in their way. Persons, whose habits are the most studious, and whose thoughts need to be more especially abstracted from the passing events of the hour, will find in domestic confusion, the ailments of a family, the perverseness of servants, and the unreasonable encroachments of friends, sufficient to render their progress all but impossible; and perhaps in the midst of such opposition as it seems bootless to contend against, they are conscious of a tendency within toward that impious murmur, "It is vain to serve God."

In such a case, we pray for patience; it is well, for "Ye have need of patience." We ask more faith: it is better still, for "All things are possible to him that believeth." We resolve to persevere through every obstruction that can encumber our path; and that is also meet and right, and our bounden duty, "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." But what a relief should we often experience, what freedom in our onward course, by one fervent, believing, understanding aspiration in these appointed words, "Deliver us from the evil one!"

One of the important uses of watchfulness combined with prayer, is to ascertain what form of supplication is most acceptable before the Lord. Now, Satan is the personal enemy of Christ in a sense, and

to an extent that can be applied to no other. He is at once the originator, the director, and the leader of every species of rebellion in heaven and earth. When the Son of God took our nature upon him, and became in fashion as a man, Satan opposed him to his face, tempted, insulted, and finally used to the utmost his permitted power, instigating the treachery of Judas, the malignity of the Jews, and the cruelty of the Romans; throughout the whole narrative of our Lord's suffering sojourn, we trace this accursed spirit, not only in his deeds, but by name: and surely it behooves us to remember all this, and to put honour upon Him who came to destroy the works of the devil, by continually seeking his all-sufficient help against the conquered, but still mighty and dangerous adversary.

It is when we would draw nigh to God, with an earnest appeal against Satan, or persuade others so to do, that we find ourselves most furiously resisted in the outset, most truly set at liberty in the end. It is when we resolve to fight neither with small or great, but only against him who is the king of the infernal hosts, that he will be discomfited, and his legions thrown into confusion. Not that evil in every shape ought not to be most steadfastly resisted, but he who is pointed out to us by that significant appellation, "Your adversary, the devil," is surely to be singled from the throng of which he is the head, and who all act in subordination to him.

All God's people undergo temptation, though not at all times, yet so very frequently, and in so many different forms, that the presence of an evil influence must be almost continual, and the power of suggesting sinful or foolish imaginations must be widely possessed and exercised among the tempters. The mind has an eye, and before that eye pictures are held, sometimes consisting even of the most ordinary concerns of daily life, accompanied with suggestions of an anxious, an irritating, a covetous, or other evil character, while the Christian is earnestly labouring after a composed spirit, and a collected mind for the service of the sanctuary. Whatever may be his usual occupations, his favourite studies, his prevailing wishes, these are so made use of as to oppose a bar between him and the simply devotional frame after

which he longs, often intermixed with distressing doubts, vain speculations, and presumptuous reasonings, connected with the very duty that he is engaged in. What a terrible display should we behold if the mist were suddenly dispelled, and our eyes opened to discern these devils at their work in the midst of a congregation, who probably consider themselves safely housed from any such intruders, and are therefore deficient in watchfulness against them! One, perchance, is in the pew, suggesting to the hearer disparaging thoughts of the minister, telling him that such a style of preaching is not calculated to profit him, and that he should seek elsewhere an instructor better suited to his case; while another in the pulpit whispers to the preacher that he is not in his proper sphere; he has reaped too little fruit of his labour there to have any warrant for thinking it his destined post of usefulness, and thus the tie on both sides is weakened, and the enemy snatches away, even from the renewed heart, many a precious grain of gospel seed, calculated to increase sixty or a hundred fold, if rightfully received and prayerfully retained. And thus he breaks many a tie that would prove a mutual blessing; inducing a wavering mind and restless habits, often leading the humble zealous pastor eventually into some snare of popularity, some sphere where personal vanity is gratified at the expense of spiritual mindedness; and he who began by desiring to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified, ends by preaching himself, and not Christ Jesus.

"Watch:" for wherever God has given a command or recorded a warning, there will Satan be at work. The first waking thought is often at his suggesting, "A little more slumber, a little more sleep: a little more folding of the hands to sleep." Prov. vi. 10. The temptation succeeds; and at an hour too late for the due regulation of the day's employment, the man rises, dissatisfied with himself. The next step is to make this loss of time a plea for curtailing the seasons of private prayer, or a means of distracting the thoughts while in the act of supplication: nor can the loss of the morning hour so wasted be retrieved during the day. In some characters, this leads to irritability of temper; and too well can the invisible enemies,

who are busily employed in following up the first advantage, use a word of unjust harshness to the detriment of many souls. In others, it induces despondency, idleness, or such a dispersion of thoughts as renders the day well nigh blank. It would be endless to follow out the customary plans of those against whom we must watch and pray; the sure way to do so effectually is to bear in mind, that the Bible is Satan's directory, since it shows what God would have his servants to do and to be; and to lead them into paths directly contrary to that revealed will, so that they may grieve the Holy Spirit, and provoke the Lord to leave them to themselves,—which is, indeed, to leave them to Satan,—is the main object of the malignant adversary.

It is not now with the Church as of old, when men might also watch for the visible ministry of angels as at the pool of Bethesda, "where an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." John v. 4. Whatever deeds of mercy these ministering spirits may be commissioned to perform, they are hidden from our eyes; but this we know, that daily, hourly proofs of our heavenly Father's care over his poor children are afforded to every one of us; and to watch them is a delightful occupation no less than a duty. How can we give thanks even for the small proportion of these mercies that come under our immediate sight, unless we watch for, and note them? We may be assured that there never is a moment when Satan, succeeding as he so frequently does, in drawing us off from the straight path of holy obedience into some sinful compliance, some unholy word, or evil thought, would not gladly cut short at that instant of time our mortal life, in the hope of gathering our souls with the ungodly. Our preservation in being is an amazing miracle: dangers surround us on every side; the food we eat, the air we breathe, is pregnant with death. Some deliverances are so very marked and conspicuous, that we are forced to see and to record them: but inconceivably greater are those which are warded off by invisible agency. Surely it becomes

us to observe these things, and audibly to acknowledge them.

In the service of our Church we are taught to unite in a form of open confession of sin; and if we could call to mind in how many instances the devil has prevailed to tempt us into evil during the past week, how often we have swerved from the right path, and "erred and strayed from God's ways like lost sheep," surely we should desire to make our deep contrition known in the presence, not only of the Lord our God, but also of his enemies who have thus drawn us into rebellion, and of the holy angels who have witnessed alike our presumptuous transgression and his sparing mercy. There is nothing in this approaching to the blasphemous tenets of Rome, by which the angels are so brought forward as to entrench upon the prerogatives, to usurp, as it were, the attributes of the Most High. It is not to be for a moment supposed that they can read our thoughts, or know more of our secret characters than the Lord may see good to reveal to them, as he represents himself to do in the parables of the sheep and the piece of money; where friends and neighbours are summoned first to hear of the recovery of what was lost, and then to rejoice that it is found. "*Likewise*," continues our Lord, "I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." Luke xv. 10. But those among the ministering spirits who are especially placed about ourselves, as we know them to be, certainly are at least as well aware of our words and actions as any fellow mortal. Our open sins are committed in their presence; but if they know no more of our contrite sorrow than usually appears in the aspect of a congregation when whispering their confession of those sins to God in public worship, marvelous indeed must it be in their sight that he should so harden our faces!

In like manner, our public thanksgiving—how cold a return must we feel it to be, even when our hearts are warmest, could we but fairly estimate the amount of loving-kindness expended upon us during the lapse of the few days since our last assembling together "to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands." We are the only oblivious parties: the devils do not forget how often

they have been repulsed, and their best laid plans baffled when they thought to harm us; nor do the holy angels forget the errands of mercy on which they have sped to our succour, help and comfort. Strange must it be to them, when, laden as we are with such incalculable benefits, and met together to unite in proclaiming them,

*Hosannas falter on our tongues,
And our devotion dies.*

Yet what are these interpositions of Providence in guarding our daily path compared with the interposition of redeeming Love, which snatched our souls out of the jaws of destruction, translated us from the power of Satan to the kingdom of God, and secured to us an inheritance among the saints in light! We utter the name that is above every name, and angels rejoice, and devils shrink. We speak of the mystery of his holy incarnation, and the song of Bethlehem is ready again to burst forth from the lips of the heavenly host; we remind him of his fasting and temptation, and they whose infernal leader was vanquished, in that awful field, are ready again to yell out, "We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." We talk, alas! with what unmoved faces and feelings! of his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion, his death and burial, and they who witnessed the anguish endured for us are present to mark the expression of self-abasement and heart-broken penitence of the rebels for whose ransom the Lord of glory stooped so low. We name his resurrection and ascension—can we name them coldly, seeing that when He arose from the dead He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, even for us, that God might dwell among us? Surely it would somewhat quicken us at least to greater reverence of deportment, greater animation and devotion, to consider what witnesses are among us, and to what they have been witnesses, from the creation of the world to this day.

Yet it is a small matter to be judged of man's or of angel's judgment; he that judgeth is THE LORD. If He be for us, it matters not who else is for, or who may be against us. Angels, principalities, powers, are nothing: we need not to conciliate the favour of the good, nor to de-

precipitate the malice of the evil legions, for He whose we are and whom we serve, is King and God over all. He bids us watch ; he tells us to gird our loins and to trim our lamps, not as trembling slaves, who dread the approach of a severe master, but as honoured guests, expecting the Bridegroom's coming, that we may rejoicingly partake in the marriage festivities. His bride is now a mourning widow ; he calls her as a woman forsaken, and grieved in spirit, for the enemies of her absent Lord have usurped his dominion, and darkened the earth with heathenism, and polluted it with blood ; and in the place where she should sit, a shameless harlot assumes her name, and brands it with the infamy of her own crimes. Well may the Lamb's wife, bewailing the desolation of His heritage, stand on her tower, and watch for his coming, whose right it is. Then shall ensue the universal reconciliation of all that God made to harmonize together, and which Satan prevailed to disorganize ; then shall the tabernacle of God be with man, and He will dwell among us who is the author, not of confusion, but of peace. Then "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High ; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. vii. 27. Whatever sin has displaced, shall again fall sweetly into its assigned station : Man shall be a merciful, a loving ruler over the inferior creatures, who in their turns shall cease to prey, the strong upon the weak ; and he shall again enjoy unrestrained communion with those heavenly beings between whom and himself sin has placed a gulf that neither can pass, except the Lord bridge it over for them. When all things that offend and that do iniquity are gathered out, when the mother of harlots is hurled from her proud seat, where she sits a queen, and now boasts that she is no widow, and shall see no sorrow, and has received her appointed portion, her plagues of death, and mourning, and famine, and utter burn-

ing with fire, all coming upon her in one day, then, and not till then, shall the night watch of the Church give place to the glories of a day that knows no going down of the sun.

That this time is not now far off, we have abundant proofs in the signs that thicken around us. The period that remains is but as an hour, and surely we may watch with the Lord that one hour. All the malignity of Satan that raged against our Master on the fearful night of Gethsemane will now be stirred up for a last effort against his Church : and the trial will be severe, the conflict terrible, even as the issue will certainly be gloriously triumphant. Whatever glimpses we may have caught of the world of spirits in the course of this inquiry, must be turned to good account ; for we shall soon need to exercise judgment in the discerning of spirits. The sixth vial, under which there can be no doubt that we now live, is marked by the going forth of the three unclean devils, of whose miracle-working power we are forewarned ; and He who has deigned to show us things to come, has not set forth cunningly-devised fables to amuse our fancy, but revealed solemn truths to guide our steps aright, when our path becomes perplexed beyond all that we have known hitherto, or that the experience of the Church has recorded. He that is born after the flesh always persecutes him that is born after the Spirit ; but now we shall have the author of all corruption of the flesh persecuting the Lord in His members ; and we shall do well to measure, so far as we can, the extent of that power which is coming against us, that we may not only be the better prepared to withstand in the evil day, but also the better able to magnify the glorious might of Him, who having himself led the way, has given his poor followers a commission to trample under foot all the power of the enemy. How needful, therefore, how precious, are the admonitions of Scripture ? "Watch and pray." "Be ye also patient ; stablish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."



SECOND CAUSES;

OR,

UP AND BE DOING.

CHAPTER I.

"HAVE FAITH IN GOD," was our Lord's reply to Peter's wondering exclamation, on beholding the withered fig-tree. The context shows that the principle thus inculcated is not the faith which justifies a sinner, but that of which Paul speaks to the Corinthians—"Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." (1 Cor. xiii. 2.) This, in its highest manifestation, is a miracle-working power; but as no miraculous gifts are at present seen needful for the church, that power is withheld; and the faith to be continually exercised by those who have already with the heart believed unto righteousness, and with the lip made confession unto salvation, is a trusting, abiding, and active reliance, that takes hold on the faithfulness of God, and viewing the whole creation, material and moral, intellectual and spiritual, as a vast machine, framed and directed by Him, recognises one almighty, overruling hand, and appeals to it alone.

The common phrase, "second causes," may be allowable; but we like it not, nor that which it is generally taken to express. Means are appointed to educe certain effects; but the one sole cause of all things is the will of God—we, of course, except from this wicked works, of which we can but say, "an enemy hath done it," the Lord not interposing to prevent, but for some wise purpose permitting the evil. Man, however, seeking temporal good for himself, or desiring to shun calamity, is prone to fix his eye on what he denominates second causes, and so, through the

weakness of his faith in God, to come far short of the blessings that are within his grasp, if he would only reach high enough to seize them.

In this day of Christian enterprise, and of Christian struggle, it is incredible to what an extent the Lord's people are paralyzed by this short-coming of their faith. They are carried away by a habit of calculating probabilities, which, however needful in some cases, is in many others nothing else than a questioning of God's power and love. How extensively applicable is the rebuke, "Ye receive not, because ye ask not."

And thus, indeed, it has been, even from of old time; for Asa, king of Judah, was a godly man. It is twice testified concerning him, that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord; and also that his heart was perfect with the Lord all his days. He had faith to the end to save his soul, but not faith to save his life.—Early in his reign he was most trusting; and his appeal to the Lord for help against the army of Ethiopia is beautiful—"Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee." The event was according to his faith—"So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled." That little word *so* is very expressive, connecting the act of man's faith with the act of God's power. Asa publicly declared his undivided, unqualified reliance on the Lord's sovereign mercy and might, *so* the Lord gloriously mani-

fested both on his behalf, crowning him with victory, and his land with peace.

But after thirty-five years of a most prosperous reign, showing his faith by works, and reaping an abundant recompense, Asa betook himself to second causes. He did not revolt from the Lord, he did not rebuild the idol altars that his holy zeal had cast down, nor slacken his devotion to God's cause, nor turn away his heart from the ways of obedience; but he calculated on the advantages to be gained by securing the alliance of the king of Syria, already leagued with Baasha, king of Israel; so he took of the gold and silver stored up in the Lord's house, and also in his own palace, and with it he bribed Benhadad to betray his ally, and to combine with him in turning the war against his rival; so that they made excursions into the territories of Israel, and compelled Baasha to act on the defensive. In the sight of man, this might appear a shrewd, judicious movement, and the successes that crowned their enterprise seemed to justify it; but it was very evil in the Lord's sight, as the message sent by Hanani proved—"Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand. Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thine hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him. Herein thou hast done foolishly; therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars." Few things try the temper of a good man like having his faith in God's providential mercy questioned, even when it has signally failed.—Asa's conscience must have borne witness to his inconsistency, and he fell into a rage with the seer, punishing him for delivering the Lord's message faithfully, and venting yet farther his irritation by oppressing some of his unoffending subjects.

But it may be said, this was not a case of calculating policy—it was a grave offence; because Ben-hadad, the Syrian, was an alien alike to the commonwealth of Israel and to the true faith, while Baasha,

against whom he was hired, was a brother of the seed of Jacob, of the house of Issachar; and though he had obtained the throne by treason, and secured it by bloodshed, and brought himself under a curse by his evil deeds, still Asa was not justified in calling on an idolatrous Gentile to execute vengeance upon him; much less to slaughter the tribes over whom he ruled. Admitting all this, we have further proof that Asa offended, and ultimately lost his life, by ceasing to manifest that faith in God which had shone out so beautifully in his earlier days. He became diseased in his feet, and instead of doing as Paul did under some visitation in the flesh, and as he had himself done when the Ethiopians came against him—instead of proclaiming a simple dependence on the Lord, and looking to him for deliverance, Asa sought to the physicians, and died.

The temple of God was then in Jerusalem; there the priests, the Levites, ministered, according to the institution of the Most High; and every possible encouragement had been given to Asa to approach the Lord, with whatsoever supplication he had to make. Hezekiah understood his privileges better; for when Sennacherib's menacing letter was received, he went straight to the house of the Lord, opened it before him, placed his cause in his hands, and was delivered. When, under a chastening visitation, he lay sick on his bed, unable to move from it, he prayed there, and without seeking help of man, rested his soul on the power and the love of God. The consequence was, that the Lord became his physician, prescribed an application for his sore, and healed him. The contrast is very striking: Hezekiah, with his lump of boiled figs, laid on by the prophet's direction, anticipating his thanksgiving service in the house of the Lord; and Asa, with a circle of court physicians, who added to their drugs charms and incantations, but all whose skill, drawn forth by the prospect of such rewards as kingly gratitude would confer, availed nothing to alleviate his pain; and he died.

Now it is by no means to be inferred that we would have the believer seek a miraculous cure for his bodily ailments, to the exclusion of means which are evidently ordained of God. But conscience

whispers, that in such cases we do lay a very unjustifiable stress on what man can do, acting on the same plan, if not from the same principle with the worldly, who do not even pretend to look beyond the skill of their professional helper. To give an ignorant or inexperienced person authority to tamper with the health of our bodies, under a notion that God will overrule all to our benefit, is presumptuous folly: better leave the case to the Great Physician alone: but while fully acquiescing in the propriety of seeking out such remedies as experience has shown to be best adapted to the disease, we would inquire whether there is not a conscious leaning on the fame of a noted proficient in the healing art; a secret assurance that, if any thing can be done, he will do it; a limiting of the Lord's power, or a pre-judging of his will, as to the channel through which the mercy shall be conveyed. This evil lies so very deep in the heart, and is so peculiarly between the individual and his Lord, that in no case may any presume to judge his brother. To judge ourselves is the point; and if the hint here given lead to but one instance of deeper self-examination, redounding to the greater glory of God in the secret experience of one of his dear children, it will not have been given in vain.

It is said of Israel, "This people have I formed for myself, and they shall show forth my praise." They did so, during many ages of prosperous exaltation over all the nations of the earth: they do so, in this the time of their protracted affliction, witnessing that though judgment is the Lord's strange work, still as to his promises, so to his threatenings, he is faithful. They shall do so when, the day-beam of his mercy breaking again on their long night of affliction, they rejoice in the fulness of his salvation, and he is glorified in them among the Gentiles. But what Israel after the flesh at present put from them, a spiritual people are permitted to enjoy, through a participation in the faith of Abraham; and those who are new-created by the power of the Holy Ghost, brought from the bondage of sin, and who are now proceeding to take possession of a heavenly inheritance, the words are likewise applicable. Of his believing church, whether Jew or Gentile, the Lord Jesus

says, "This people have I formed for myself, and they shall show forth my praise."

This, then, is the great object of our election, and of our continuance in mortal life: to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into marvellous light, we must glorify Him in our bodies, and in our spirits: with the last, He only can hold direct communion; but the first term includes all that we do and say—all that we leave undone and unsaid—not only in the view of our fellow mortals, but, in that of a multitude of beings who are not mortal, yet ever surround us; ministering spirits, employed on an embassy of mercy, and wicked spirits lying in wait to tempt and to destroy. Of this invisible host we think too little; we generally suppose that what is not perceptible to man, is known to the Lord alone; but this is an error, and perhaps a little consideration of the matter may quicken our perception of the wide range which this duty of outwardly glorifying God embraces.

The man who in his family reads the Bible, and devoutly prays, and shapes his public life according to its precepts, so far glorifies God in his body, and shines as a light before his brethren and the world. If the same man, though a believer, so far yields to indolence, carelessness, or any other hinderance, as occasionally to neglect the private study of God's word, to omit, curtail, or with outward irreverence of gesture and deportment to go through his devotions in his own chamber, so far as the external act is concerned, he is dishonouring the Lord, and laying himself open to the suspicion of hypocrisy, among very many who cannot see faith in his heart, except as it works the outward indications of love to God and man. This may give a clew to a multitude of instances, where each of us has offended, and does daily offend; nor is it the less true because the church has sadly lost sight of it; but how evident is the fact, that what we find in the Bible alone, and very rarely hear insisted on in the pulpit, or find prominently forward in the writings of men, comes to be regarded by us as a thing that has been or that will be, rather than as a thing that is! So prone we are to put something between us and God, that even the most gifted of his faithful

ambassadors, viewed as we view them, will unconsciously eclipse some important doctrine of the word which they stand forth rightly to divide. They urge upon their people the necessity of closet religion, as in a season where they are alone with God; but man is never alone with God, save in the silent workings of his spirit, which only the Searcher of hearts can discern. The spirit within him will often make intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered, and he who knoweth the mind of the Spirit, hears the unuttered cry, grants the request, and replenishes the weary thirsting soul with such beamings of divine love and pity, such whispered assurances, "It is I; be not afraid," as the eye of an archangel cannot catch, nor the ear of an archangel overhear. Often and often in the busy throng of men, surrounded by the host of heaven, and dodged by the emissaries of hell, is privileged man alone with his God. We do not, therefore, encroach on what is strictly spiritual, while contending that what is visible includes far more than is usually conceded; and by consequence that we manifest our want of faith in God, our distrust of his mercy, our offensive limitations of his power, more provokingly than we are willing to admit; frequently placing obstacles in the way of those gifts which he is so willing to bestow. Whether prayer be audible or not, the Lord hears and accepts it, as the utterance of the heart; but is he not especially glorified when the petition is presented, the plea advanced, so that they who witness the mercy vouchsafed shall know that it was asked and obtained in the all-prevailing name of Jesus! The people whom he has formed for himself thus continually showing forth his praise, to the intent that unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church, the manifold wisdom, and mercy too, of God.

Bearing this in mind, and not excluding from our thoughts those whom we cannot exclude from our presence, seeing that God has stationed one class about us to thwart the malignant designs of another class, placed there by Satan, we will enter more closely into the every-day actings of that "faith in God" which our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us both to cherish

and to use. And since the things that aforetime were written by inspiration, were written for our ensample, the experience of believers, recorded in the Bible, will serve at once as a balance to weigh, and a light to elucidate our own practice. There was no mercy vouchsafed to them that is not equally free to us: no measure of holiness attained to by them that we are not encouraged to strive after: to them strength was imparted according to their day, and strength is promised to us according to ours. The faith that Abraham had is precisely the faith required in every believer, though he may not be called on to place it in such a trying furnace as Abraham did. Yet tried it will certainly be, for it is gold; and through the alloy that man's nature inevitably mixes up with it, the Refiner's fire is needful to purge and to brighten it, that it may be found unto His praise and glory, reflecting his beautiful image at his appearing to acknowledge and to claim his own in the presence of his Father and of the holy angels.

Our object is to prove that holy people of old shone and prospered in proportion as they overlooked what we term second causes, and used the privilege so graciously recorded of the Most High, by coming to him in all their perplexities, clinging to his promise, and waiting for his mercy. If we can bring this home practically to ourselves, blessed indeed will be the result; for in what perfection of peace is he kept whose mind is wholly staid upon the Lord!

CHAPTER II.

FANCY has a great deal to do with unsettling our faith. The mischievous practice of mixing pictorial representations with God's simple word, has helped on the affliction. We know that the saints of old were men of like passions with ourselves, and in the interest excited by their history it is probable we should find little time or inclination for sketching out their bodily appearance. With very few exceptions, it is wholly passed over in the Bible, which, being written for all ages and all nations, is divinely so arranged, as

to bring before us what is common to all. Popery, however, always opposed to spirituality, prevailed to establish a fashion that we cannot now get rid of. Images, whether sculptured or engraven, maintain their credit, though they have lost their worship among us; and we can hardly meet with the name of a patriarch or apostle, without picturing to ourselves the outward man, according to the notion given us by these artists, and, however accurate it may be, it still keeps alive a feeling of dissimilarity, perhaps undetected by ourselves, so that Abraham's faith seems a thing as little suited to us as his costume. We identify him, probably, less as the sinful, idolatrous human being chosen by sovereign grace, called by sovereign power, upheld by sovereign love, and gifted out of the abundance that is in Christ Jesus, whose day he, by faith, saw and was glad,—less as having a body just like our own, composed of bone, and flesh, and muscle, born and growing, dying and turning to dust, even as we, than as a mysterious-looking apparition, with long beard and flowing robes, dwelling in a tent, reclining under a palm-tree, and in every such particular unlike ourselves. We are willing, yea, most fervently desirous, to be blessed with faithful Abraham; but his very faith seems a thing as alien to our habits of feeling, as are his garment and habitation from those belonging to ourselves. This is one of the obstacles which, though not universally, are yet very extensively found to exist, when once the mind is fairly bent to analyze its most familiar impressions. Imagine Abraham living in the same street with us, habited like our neighbours, and pursuing such avocations as are customary among us, and we shall find how much of his personal appearance, how little of his inward life has taken hold of our imaginations. This applies to all, or nearly all, whose acceptable works, the fruit of faith, are related in Scripture. We would gladly reject whatsoever God has not told us, and fix our attention on what he has spoken concerning those whose footsteps we are enjoined to follow.

The Lord spake to Abraham from heaven—he speaks to us by his word lying before us, by his Spirit moving within us, by his providences unfolding around

us. If he has called us from an ungodly world, and in principle and practice separated us from even such of our own kindred who still, in works, deny him, can we not confidently appropriate the sequel? Surely to us is the word sent—"Fear not; I am thy shield, and exceeding great reward." Yet how few aspire to the standard of Abraham's faith! and while pausing contentedly, perhaps, very far short of it, do we not practically attest that we regard his attainment as somewhat inherent in, and peculiar to the individual, rather than as the gift of God, who is able to bestow on us an equal portion of the same grace? Does not the doctrine of second causes here creep in, and mar the beauty of what we are called on to survey as a glorious instance of God's work in the soul of man? Certainly the total disregard of second causes, and a full, unwavering, unflinching dependence on the plain word of the Lord, literally understood, and without a reference to any of the laws, as they are called, of nature, which he who made them can at will suspend, forms the feature in Abraham's character which constitutes him the father of all who believe; and since in following the example of his faith consists our title to be numbered with his spiritual offspring, and also our well-grounded assurance that amid all the changes of this mortal life, we should be protected, sustained and guided, even as Abraham was, the more closely we examine the texture of his faith, the better able shall we be to detect the imperfections of our own faulty copy. For, let it be remembered, the raw material is what we receive from above; to shape and apply it according to his own daily requirements is the part of the recipient. In quality, the gift is uniform: we cannot be justified, neither can we do acceptable works, by means of a faith in any wise differing from that of Abraham and the other saints; but though God gives liberally to all who ask, many receive not, because they ask not, the abundance that they might obtain; and to which among us is not the Lord's reproof applicable—"If ye had faith but as a grain of mustard-seed!"

Yet we must make an exception, when commending the patriarch Abraham. He had received the promise, that not

Eliezer of Damascus, but a son born to himself should be his heir, and that his progeny should equal the stars of heaven for multitude. He believed this, and his implicit faith was counted to him for righteousness. But instead of waiting to see whether the promise would not be fulfilled, as it ultimately was, without any infringement of the primeval law, which gave to man a single helpmate only, he betook himself to the crooked path of calculating how far second causes were likely to operate in bringing about the promised blessing; and finding the result unfavourable, he fell in with Sarah's unhallowed expedient, and not only brought much domestic misery into his household, but gave occasion for sin to his wife, to her handmaiden, and to the child whose irregular birth was a reproach to his mistrust of God's faithfulness. It must have sorely pained Abraham, seeing how needlessly he had embittered the poor handmaiden's life by an unseemly exaltation, to receive the command—"Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman." Sarah's natural evil was wrought into cruel oppression, Hagar's into disobedience and scorn of her mistress, Ishmael's into insolent mockery of the promised seed, and scandal given before a numerous household, all through the failure of good Abraham's faith, in having recourse to second causes.

Nor was this the only instance. Before the Lord had fully revealed his gracious purpose, and received Abraham into covenant, the pilgrim had relied on his own worldly wisdom to avert any evil consequences to himself, from the attractiveness of his spouse. This is not much to be wondered at; but he gave a lamentable proof of the infirmity that cleaves to man, when, after the promise had actually been given that Sarah should bear the promised inheritor, and he surely, therefore, might have intrusted her to the Lord's keeping, without any more scheming expedients for her security and his own, he practised again the same deception in the territories of Abimelech. It would seem, indeed, from his explanation to the king, that it was only the continued observance of a wrong compact into which they had entered on first setting forth; but such in-

consistencies ought to stimulate us to a more vigorous pressing forward to the prize of our high calling, seeing what stumbling-blocks were laid, and how embarrassing they proved in the path even of faithful Abraham when once his eye was allured to look towards second causes.

After this, the patriarch wavered not—his path shone, as the path of the just always will, more and more unto the perfect day. A test was prepared, a furnace heated for the trial of his faith, that nothing but the purest gold could have come forth from. It is so lovely to trace the quiet fixedness on God of this holy man's mind; his childlike obedience, noiseless, unhesitating, unquestioning. No second cause came between the eye of his faith and its Almighty Author. He acts as though the universe contained none but the Most High, himself, and the object of his awful mission. The servants might have interposed to stay the hand that he was willing to raise, but oh! according to the yearnings of the heart, how much more willing to have arrested! He will not incur the hazard of such interposition, and, without exciting any anxiety in their minds, he bids them remain while he and the lad go to worship; adding, that they would come again to them. The apostle tells us, that Abraham went forth to slay his son, "knowing that God was able to raise him up again from the dead;" and since the promise had been distinctly given, that in Isaac should his seed be called, he certainly felt that the Lord was pledged to do so. It was an unreserved casting of himself on the immutability of God's declarations. He did not argue, "Because the Lord has positively decreed that Isaac should live and become a mighty nation, therefore he cannot really intend me to slay him." No; he meddled not with the divine decrees, when his present work was with the divine commands. He lifted the knife with full purpose of heart "to slay his son." He was prepared to see him a bleeding corpse, and consumed moreover to ashes, preparatory to the receiving him again from the dead. Who can question the clearness with which the church of old apprehended the great mystery of the resurrection of the body, when they view Abraham about to consume the flesh and bones of

his child, knowing that God was able to bring him back, in the same body, after it should have been dispersed in smoke and cinders? Truly it was a glorious spectacle then displayed on Mount Moriah! We know not that any, save Isaac, were made acquainted with it until Moses, by divine inspiration, recorded it for universal profit; but how many chariots and horses of fire were there in that mountain—how many angelic friends, rejoicing over their fellow-servant—how many awe-struck foes, forcibly withheld from whispering rebellion in his ear, and condemned to look upon a type, the substance of which achieved every believer's ransom from the pit prepared for the devil and his angels.

And why should we not, each in his own measure, afford the same occasion of rejoicing to the hosts of heaven, baffle in like manner the rebel spirits, and give glory to Him who is the Author and Finisher of our faith, by using it to overcome the world? Abraham's trial we shall not undergo, neither have we, like Abraham, seen the Lord, and talked with him, and received the miraculous attestations that were multiplied to the patriarch. It is certain that, according to what is required of us will be the help given to fulfil it; and we are shamefully backward, not only in asking, but in desiring power to obey some of the plainest commands laid upon us by the Lord. We select from his word certain injunctions, which we are pleased to take literally, and profess to follow them; but others standing close beside them, and in no way distinguished from the former, we arbitrarily pronounce to be figurative, and never even attempt to obey them in the letter. Secondary considerations thrust themselves in, and we sit in judgment on God's meaning, interpreting it according to the bias of our own habits and prejudices.

An example shall be adduced, where one half of an admonition given by our Lord is generally received as a plain direction, which it undoubtedly is, and as such acted on by most real Christians, in the spirit of humility; while the other half, quite as unequivocally literal, has never yet, at least within our knowledge, been habitually reduced to practice; and in this state of the church we fear it never will be. The former occurs in Luke's

Gospel, chap. xiv., when our Lord marked how the people, eating bread in a Pharisee's house, chose out the chief rooms—“When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” This is easy of acceptance: it is a fact that a man who takes a place lower than his rank entitles him to, is pretty sure of a summons from his entertainer to assume a higher place; and the respect thus shown is marked by all. We, therefore, find almost all well-mannered people ready to act upon the principle. But our Heavenly Master did not end here; he had spoken to the guests; he now addressed him that bade them, and who among us will say that he has adopted the rules laid down, or intends to do so? “When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.” The writer has often been arrested by this beautiful passage, and secretly asked, When was the command abrogated? When did the followers of the Lord Jesus obtain his concurrence in the plan of adorning their houses with such delicate furniture as the children of poverty must not come in contact with—their tables with costly plates, their dishes with choice viands, and then assemble a circle of friends, and kinsmen, and rich neighbours, to luxuriate in what, perhaps, is not costly in comparison with a worldling's display, but which, if the actual value of it were laid out in the plainest fare, such as satisfies a beggar's hunger, would make indeed “a feast” to such

a company of the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, the destitute, of all classes, as should be a spectacle for angels to rejoice in? The objections are many, and probably no one now reading this page will be at a loss to advance some strong reason against complying with the letter of the precept. We do not presume to enter the lists: we can only say, *the Lord hath spoken it*; and remark that if it were obeyed, if our intercourse with our equals was carried on irrespective of the eating and drinking system, which leads to such dreadful waste, if all that could be spared for even a small dinner party was punctually laid out in making a scriptural "feast" of beef and potatoes for the very poor, the result would change the whole aspect of our population; the poor would often eat, where now they perish with hunger; and the disciples who entertain them would find a joy in the contemplation, compared with which the pleasure resulting from what is now mis-called hospitality—the feeding of those who will feed us in return—and squandering on expensive accompaniments the price of many a poor man's sustenance, would become a sin to be repented of, rather than a privilege to be enjoyed.

But though the believer's heart and conscience may secretly prompt an admission of this truth, second causes forthwith intervene to banish the thought. The world's customs and the world's remarks; the loss of *caste*, the supposed affectation of singularity, and the strange yet prevalent whim that, in order to enjoy the society and conversation of our friends it is indispensable to prime them with good cheer, with all the culinary and other accompaniments our means will admit of—these things are found weighty enough to turn the balance against our Lord's command, and deter us from even seeking the faith that would enable us to fulfil it. Surely if He was to appear again, a poor, unknown wanderer, without a shelter for his head, and dependent on the ministrations of others for his daily food, it is not in a gentleman's house he would be likely to find entertain-

This instance is only brought forward to show that we have surrounded ourselves with a host of obstacles, encumbering the walks of faith, so that to make

straight paths for our feet is a difficulty that our infirmity magnifies into an impossibility. Conscious of this, we are content to travel along the irregular paths marked by custom, and are more ready to seek after man's glosses on words, than we find so embarrassing, than, with a simple reliance on the wisdom that condescendingly instructs us, to say, "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth." Yet do we not look for a literal fulfilment of His promises to us, while explaining away so large a proportion of our bounden duty and service to Him? And do we not herein err, and lose much, very much, both of blessing from above, and of peace in our souls? Oh for grace to put away all that stands between us and Christ, alike as the object of faith and obedience, in order that Christ alone may stand between us and the Father!

CHAPTER III.

JOSEPH was a glorious instance of unfaltering obedience, the result of unwavering faith. He set God always before him; and what was the result? Whether in the house of Potiphar, daily exposed to ensnaring solicitations, or in the felon's cell, overseeing his fellow-captives, or in the dazzling presence of earth's proudest monarch, required to give that royal idolater proof of God, the God of Israel's especial favour to him; or in the onerous charge of an empire's difficult concerns during a seven years' famine, the same testimony is, with beautiful iteration, always borne; "The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man." Prosperity in temporal things is no certain mark of divine favour to the follower of Christ, who must be ready to take up a daily cross; yet when affliction presses we have warrant for believing that God is willing to be entreated, and, like a pitying father, to remove or to lighten the chastisement, if approached with the confidence that a child should feel, and honoured by such a measure of faith as will glorify him. Paul acted on this knowledge; and though he did not obtain the removal of what distressed him, he received such encouraging

assurance of God's merciful purpose in it, as enabled him to glory in that which before was his chief torment. "But Paul was very unlike me; his calling, his gifts, his privileges, were altogether dissimilar from mine." True; therefore, we may rest assured that such parts of his individual experience as bore no exclusive reference to his apostolic mission, would not be recorded unless for our personal benefit. He says as much: "Whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual (or wrought) in the enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." 2 Cor. i. 6. But what we want to enforce is this, that our freedom of access to God, through Christ, is as great as was that of any one noted in the word of inspiration; his eye as intently fixed on us as on Abraham, Joseph, or Paul; and a fuller, more practical conviction of this precious truth, leading us habitually to draw nigh unto God, would cause him more perceptibly to draw nigh unto us so that Satan should be constantly rebuked, our courage raised, our hopes brightened, and our hearts filled with the peace which passeth all understanding.

It was because Joseph so constantly realized the Lord's spiritual presence, that the Lord was so evidently with him in temporal things. It was because Paul with perseverance and confidence made his request to the Lord for the removal of a thorn in the flesh, that he received an audible reply, giving a reason for the withholding of what he asked. Now, we do not expect to be made rulers of kingdoms, like Joseph, or to hear God speak from the third heaven, like Paul: but though the dispensation be changed, the Lord changeth not. His love is the same, his power is the same, and, coming to him without an "if," we shall find that "all things are possible to him that believeth." If in the course of his providence, manifested by its being in the evident path of our duty, he calls on us to make a sacrifice of property, of ease, of comfort, of inclination, yea, of our good name itself, we have Abraham for an example of quiet acquiescence. If it be something which we really think we cannot do without, we know that He who gave it to us is able to restore it.

Joseph chose to suffer wrongfully as an evil-doer, rather than do the evil to which he was tempted. Had he looked to second causes, he would have been sorely perplexed: he might have argued with himself, "If I provoke this enemy of godliness, she may bring dishonour on the name of the Lord, whose only servant and witness in this country I am: therefore, not for my own, but for his cause's sake, I must at least dissemble, and avoid irritating her." But no: Joseph knew that God would maintain his own cause, and that his task was to hold no parley with sin; to bring none of his shallow wisdom or erring calculations into the field. He exceedingly glorified the Lord by his unflinching consistency. He who was known only as "the God of the Hebrews" might have seemed to be more dishonoured when the only Hebrew in Egypt was cast into a dungeon on an undoubted charge of most profligate villainy and hypocrisy, than if his servant had allowed a single individual to hope he might be led into secret transgression, who, for her own sake, would have preserved his good name unsullied among men. This would have been a very legitimate use of second causes, and it might have succeeded so far as Joseph was personally concerned; but he had conceptions too high and too just of the Lord's jealous care over His own glory, to deem that the contrivances of man were needful to preserve it from reproach; and the consequence was, that he suffered a stain the most disgraceful to fall on his character, and permitted the whole church of God in Egypt, comprised in his person, to be incarcerated as a felon; thereby preparing the way for the most triumphant manifestation of the Lord's terrible omnipotence throughout the whole land of Egypt, when that mighty people whose forerunner he was were delivered by a mighty hand, and an outstretched arm, and by great signs and wonders, and marched forth to lay the foundation of a kingdom whose equal the world never saw; and which will yet be exalted again to a height unparalleled, the wonder, the joy, the praise of the whole earth. We sometimes see Christians afraid to do a right action, lest their motive should be mistaken, their good evil spoken of, and the enemies of the Lord thereby en-

bled to blaspheme; but the man who keeps as close to God as Joseph did, will find himself enabled likewise to follow through evil report no less than through good, when the Lord permits such trial to overtake him; and he may bear this also in mind, that the devils who tempted, and the angels who ministered to this heir of salvation, and in whose presence God was exceedingly glorified by his undeviating obedience, are also around him; and while holding fast his integrity, the believer, however cast off by his mistaken fellow-men, has many sympathizing friends to witness his trial; many blaspheming foes, whose mouths are stopped, and their designs baffled, by his steadfastness in looking to the Lord alone. Many, alas! retain a fair footing, perhaps a very high one, in the estimation of their brethren, while much is seen and heard by those invisible observers which, if published to the church, would condemn them as withered branches to be cut off from the outward communion of saints; and many no doubt there also are, lying under the severest censure of man, who will be distinguished and confessed of the Lord Jesus, before the angels in heaven.

With the exception of his own prophetic dreams, which he understood not, and the power given him to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh's servants and of the king himself, we do not read of any direct revelation made to Joseph. This brings him nearer to our level than Abraham, and renders him who was one of the most remarkable types of our Lord, an example to the lowliest of His followers. His unremitting, uncomplaining submission to the tyrannous cruelty of his brethren, whose wrath he had excited by faithfully reporting to their father the evil of their ways;—his generous forbearance towards the wicked woman, whose husband he might have made acquainted with her profligacy, and so delivered her to a dreadful death while ensuring his own safety;—his patient endurance of unjust imprisonment, so that it seems that he did not even make protestations of his innocence, until a miraculous interposition led him to acquaint the chief butler with his case;—his deportment before the king, repeatedly invoking the name, and magnifying the promise of the God whom that monarch knew not;—his

lovely conduct to the brethren who had sold him, and whose repentance for their base conduct to him he only tested by putting it seemingly in their power to get rid of Benjamin also—these, and many other particulars in the exquisite character and story of Joseph, all appeal to our everyday experience, under provocation, under temptation, and in the dangerous season of prosperity. The more minutely we examine it, the stronger proof we shall find, that the substance of all may be summed up in the fact, Joseph had faith in God, and according to his faith it was unto him.

Shall we speak of Moses? His mighty mission places him so high, his direct intercourse with the Eternal renders him so dazzling to our weak eyes, that perhaps it would not fall in with the plan of what is intended as wholly a practical meditation; but of his parents we speak. The rigid superintendence under which the Israelites were placed, their helpless bondage, the number and might of their oppressors, and above all, the interest which the Egyptians had in cutting off as many as they possibly could from the male Hebrew population, made it, so far as man was concerned, a desperate enterprise to conceal a boy. Yet this, through the intrepid faith of Shiprah and Puah, who "feared God," was done in many cases; and it would seem that the general command to "kill" every son was afterwards particularized, the order being to cast him into the river, because the number of victims could thereby be more correctly ascertained, the act being public: so that only "by faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents; because they saw he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment."

The beauty of the babe Moses is so often mentioned, in connection with his wonderful preservation, that we are led to surmise there must have been something very remarkable in his aspect, leading his parents to a well-grounded persuasion that the Lord had some great purpose to accomplish by him; we cannot otherwise account for the commendation bestowed on the parents' faith in so preserving him. However, the inhuman sharp-sightedness of the oppressors rendered it impossible longer to hide their treasure; and with a

faith that not merely disregarded, but scoffed at second causes, his mother obeyed the murderous command, and literally "cast him into the river;" for he lay at the bottom of his little ark, whose keel of course, daubed with slime and with pitch, was below the surface of the water. She put him in the place where the emissaries of slaughter went, probably, to number the dead babes whom the crocodiles had not devoured. She put him not in the open stream, but where the flags would for a while entangle and retain the bark; and there she left him, not to the river, nor to the crocodiles, nor to the Egyptians, but to HER GOD. Miriam does not seem to have had any commission to stay and watch; with lingering fondness for the lovely baby, she "stood afar off to wit what would be done to him"—out of a choice of horrors which would be his fate. Little did Jochebed imagine what the Lord had willed to accomplish by that babe in the ark, by his watching sister Miriam, and the unborn Aaron! Nor can the most obscure of God's people foresee what mighty events, national or universal, may result from one sacred, successful struggle of faith within his bosom. Moses was the outcast infant of a brick-making slave and his poor wife: and Martin Luther in his cell, by faith working his way out of bondage, and a darkness that Egypt could not parallel, was as little likely to break the power of Rome, as Jochebed when weaving her ark was to scatter the might of Pharaoh. This we know, that the fight of faith in some solitary bosom is the first step in all the glorious works that God is pleased to accomplish by human instrumentality.

What was Nehemiah? A captive Jew, carried away from his own country, and retained in the court of the Persian monarch, where his exemplary character obtained him a post of singular honour, seeing how frequently the ruler of a people met his death by a poisoned cup. This Hebrew of the Hebrews, this splendid example of a most triumphant faith, was but a solitary stranger in a glittering crowd: amid the magnificence of Shushan the palace, his heart yearned towards the desolate ruins, the broken walls of his own Jerusalem; and when some wanderers from the land of Judea visited the scenes of Artaxerxes' splendour, he made inquiry

"concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem." Their report wrung his heart with sorrow; he wept and mourned, and fasted before the Lord; and looking on his position in the Persian court, not as the most favourable contrast, which it certainly was, to the general lot of his brethren, and therefore to be thankfully retained, but as a means of access on behalf of the afflicted remnant of his people, he made at once his prayer for mercy in the sight of the Gentile king, that he might become the deliverer of captive Israel. When the request was granted, when Artaxerxes had kindly inquired into the cause of his dejected looks, and invited him to make his petition, in reference to the city, the place of his fathers' sepulchres, Nehemiah did not calculate how many Persian artisans, or how much Persian gold he should require the monarch to send, for the accomplishment of so grand a work. He never glanced at second causes—never thought of the powers that would certainly oppose his project, nor of the scattered, disheartened, impoverished state of his people. He had a token for good, in that his prayer was so far answered: he therefore believed that sufficiency would be given to him for the work; and his reply, considering him as an individual accustomed to all the luxurious, relaxing refinements of such a court, was a most marvellous exhibition of unhesitating faith. "If it please the king, and if thy servant has found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my father's sepulchre, that I may build it."—Why, if the Lord was with him, could not Nehemiah rebuild Jerusalem, as well as Artaxerxes? True, one was monarch of the known world, and the other a poor foreign serving-man, at that great monarch's footstool; but Nehemiah had got hold of something stronger than an empire; he had grasped a promise: "Though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of heaven, yet I will gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen, to set my name there." He knew the Lord would gather them, and his part was to see that a dwelling was prepared for their reception; and he also knew that into whose heart soever the Lord put it to

arise and build, He would prosper that man's work. Oh, what a rod and a staff in this our pilgrimage is the word of God, when taken as a little child takes it—simply, literally, and without a “but”

His petition being granted, he cheerfully limits to a given time his absence from Shushan; and proceeds to ask for all he may require. It is so beautiful to hear the cup-bearer, as he stands trembling with joy before the monarch, asking for a letter to the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give him timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to “the House”—the Lord's House—and for the wall of the city, and for the house that he should enter into. Jerusalem all the while being a heap of ruins, and the courtiers no doubt, who heard this extraordinary dialogue, laughing within themselves at the cup-bearer's folly; either supposing the king was amusing himself at the poor Jew's expense, or pitying the royal simplicity that could seriously entertain so wild a project.

The sequel we all know: it is one of the most captivating books in the whole Bible; and Nehemiah one of the most glorious characters on record; but few who read it, perhaps, take him as an indication of what God will have *them* to be. They do not expect to build up a city, nor even to repair a wall or a gate in Jerusalem, literal or spiritual: yet since some body must do both, it is hard to show what right any individual has to take it for granted that he is not the man, unless it be from a consciousness that he has not faith in God; the absence of which faith is a sin, and its acquirement within his reach; for, be it remembered, God never commands us to have anything that we cannot get by seeking it; and when he says, “Have faith,” we are bound to know that it is within our reach, if we choose to have it. “I am not eloquent,” says Moses, in a fit of cowardly unbelief, “O, my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.” The answer was, “Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb or deaf, or the seeing or the blind? have not I, the LORD?” But Moses could not get rid of his second causes: he still pleaded for leave to flinch, and begged that another,

more competent might be chosen: “And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses.” Do we not often provoke in the same way that anger by our incorrigible mistrust of the Most High, refusing to do work for him, when it is plainly set before us; and pleading the want of those gifts which, if they be necessary, we have only to ask for, and they will be given.

CHAPTER IV.

A CHEQUERED faith produces a changeful walk, and an experience where clouds often make dark what might have been a path of steady brightness. We see this in David's history, than whom no man ever knew greater reverses, or more wonderfully realized that rule of God's dealings, “According to your faith, be it unto you.” His slaughter of the lion and the bear, as described by himself, was miraculous. “When he arose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him and slew him.” This inspired him with great confidence, so that, on the strength of it, or rather in the strength of the Lord who had delivered him out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear, he was not afraid to meet the gigantic Philistine before whom all the host of Israel trembled. Still he was victorious in every battle, until the hatred of Saul compelled him to flee from a court which seems by no means to have been his chosen sphere; and thence we find him tossed on a sea of troubles, the waves whereof only subsided when he was able to manifest renewed trust in God. The cruel murder of eighty-five innocent priests, the destruction of their families, and ruin of their city, all resulted from a falsehood told by David to Abimelech, under the influence of such personal fear as neither the beast of the forest nor the champion of the Philistines could excite; and which was unworthy of him. The fact of his obtaining by fraud the sword that he had taken by conquest from Goliath, the very sight of which might have refreshed his memory as to his deliverance no less from the hand of the Philistine than from the paw of the lion and of

the bear, manifests the danger of looking off from the Almighty arm to second causes. Yet no sooner does he again inquire of the Lord concerning an attack on the troubling Keilah, than he receives a commission to go and smite them; and when he so far wavers through the timidity of his companions as to repeat the question, he is strengthened by another promise of success. Conquest, of course, ensued, whenever David sought direction from the Lord; he was guided by his counsel, and by his grace enabled to set a beautiful example of loyal forbearance towards a treacherous king. Yet could not all these wonderful interpositions silence the voice of unbelief. He was safe under the shadow of the Almighty; but still said in his heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul;" and goaded by the apprehension, he fled into Gath, the birth-place of his first enemy, and thence carried on an exterminating warfare against the inhabitants of neighbouring lands, covertly; and by falsehood persuading the men of Gath that his excursions were against the allies of Israel. Into all these crooked paths did he wander, whom God had so greatly exalted, and so signally blessed, and all from an unbelieving propensity to calculate probabilities, and to dread disasters against which believing prayer would have been a sure defence. While following in the army of the aliens, who nevertheless mistrusted and drove him from them, the Amalekites, whose cities he had secretly smitten, assailed and burned his, carrying captive his family and those of his adherents. This was a time of sore trouble; for in addition to his own grief, he had to encounter the wrath of his companions, who even talked of stoning him as the author of his calamity; and it proved the best of blessings to him; for when all else failed, when the Philistines had rejected him, and his own followers sought his life, he was driven back to the Rock of refuge which he seemed to have forsaken for the shifting sands of human wisdom. "David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." The sacred Ephod was once more brought; the Most High was humbly entreated for guidance; and in a believing adoption of the course pointed out to him, David retrieved every thing that had been carried away, and

took much spoil besides. Two days after his triumphant return, tidings were brought that his fierce enemy, the king of Israel, had fallen in battle; and, still acting in humble obedience to the Lord's command, he repaired to Judea, and was anointed king.

To the close of his long reign, every passage in the life of David furnishes a commentary on that comprehensive word, Faith, in the sense that it is here considered in—nearness to God in believing prayer, and a full, unreserved dependence on Him as a loving, a most provident Father. The parental feeling among men is indeed so far varied by individual character, that we cannot point to every one we may meet, as an illustration of what we would represent, but let each of us call to mind, throughout the circle of our observation, the father who does most tenderly think for his children; who makes their health, their comfort, their prosperity, his first and most constant care; who, with adequate means to supply them liberally, never grudges them a single good thing; who watches over them, alike in the hour of study, of recreation, of temptation and of danger; who never suffers any other interest, any other consideration, for a moment to withdraw his careful regard from them; and who, from intimate observation, perfectly understands their respective characters, wants and weaknesses—such a father, if we cannot single him out, we can at least readily believe to exist; and if the child of that man were to tell us he wanted some necessary thing, in his father's power to give, but which he could not obtain, we should either disbelieve the tale, or be satisfied that the grumbler had not stated the case to his parent, or else that the latter had undergone some great change of character since we last observed him. Now it is no stretch of fancy, but a sober fact, that all which we have particularized as marking the best of earthly fathers, belongs to the Lord, our Father in heaven, with the addition of INFINITY to each beautiful attribute— infinite love, infinite care, infinite watchfulness, infinite knowledge, and absolute unchangeableness in all of these divine perfections; while we, heirs of corruption, children of wrath, transgressors from the womb, and oh, even when renewed by the

mighty power of the Holy Ghost, how slow of heart to believe the record of God's unutterable love to us in His dear Son!—we are the children of his Father, by adoption, counted as his own, and every endearing feature of this perfection of goodness is in full, in perpetual exercise on our behalf. Moreover, the means of an earthly parent, however ample, must have a limit, and be somewhat dependent on contingencies, but not so with our Father in heaven: human imagination cannot stretch to compass the smallest part of His immense riches; nor can the prodigality of millions of worlds subtract from them a perceptible fraction. Oh that we could obtain but one glimpse of the glorious goodness of Him who now waiteth to be gracious to every one of us! that we could comprehend the loving-kindness which lets us want, lets us experience the insufficiency of all human helps, in order that we may ask of Him, in the way He loves to be asked, with a full, confiding, loving trust in His tenderness, and an utter disregard of all intermediate causes, so that when we receive we may know assuredly that to Him alone is our thanksgiving due. Do we pine in sickness? we know not whether He may see best to supply us with outwardly healing medicine, or with such cordials of internal strength and sweetness as shall render bodily disease a privilege, seeing with what enjoyments it is blended. Are we straitened in our pecuniary resources? we cannot tell on which of his numerous bankers he will give us a cheque; but while the silver is his, and the gold is his, and we are his, He will not leave us destitute, as the world leaves its miserable spendthrifts. He may see it needful to rebuke our past want of faith, or of liberality, or of self-denial, or of proper care, by letting us know the pinchings of necessity, or the heart-sickness resulting from inability to satisfy just demands; but have we tried, fairly tried, the effects of a plain appeal to our wealthy Father? Have we laid before Him, openly and distinctly, our precise case, acknowledged the folly or wilfulness, or selfishness that brought us into straits, and implored his help with the same sort of confidence, though in a much higher degree, with which we would ask an indulgent mother, a fond husband, a

tender wife, a brother who loved us as his own soul, and who possessed, yea, held in his hand, that for which we plead, in order that we might accept it? True, it may not be at the first asking, nor at the second, nor until we have come so often as to make us right well remember the way; for faith must be tried in a furnace, and being so much more precious than the gold that perisheth, it is well worth the price of long waiting for the latter, to have it duly refined. Patience, too, must have her perfect work, and perhaps of all graces this is the one that works with the most unceasing interruption. "He that believeth shall not make haste;" therefore, while patience fails, no evidence of faith is present. Our physician may hear our statement, and withdraw, and be long in preparing the remedy; but since he certainly has undertaken the case, we are content to give him time: our beneficent father may be fully purposed to relieve us from all distresses, yet, in lieu of gold, give us a bill at a long date; or, perhaps, not even tell us at what date it will become payable; still, knowing how impossible it is that he should mock our trust, we are content that he has invited us to tell him all, and has not rescinded the standing promise of helping us in our time of need. But we are not so patient when our Divine Physician, our Heavenly Father, leaves us waiting: we secretly doubt either his love or his faithfulness; and find it hard to believe, that if we cast all our worldly care upon Him, if by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, we make known our requests, and persevere in seeking first the kingdom and righteousness of God, we may enjoy the sleep that his beloved enjoy, and not water our pillow with secret tears, or discompose our couch with tossings to and fro, because we cannot see what he is about to do, who has heard though he has not yet answered us.

"With thanksgiving." This is a great point; and if we spent in a retrospect of God's past mercies the hours we lose in brooding over the present and fearful bodings for the future, we should expedite the help. This branch of prayer is so pleasing in the Lord's sight, and its neglect so offensive, that we may profitably dwell on some of the instances noticed in Scripture,

where the presence or the absence of such acknowledgment has evidently wrought for the welfare or the woe of the party concerned. We shall merely touch on a few prominent examples.

First, in the case of Jacob, when he was "greatly afraid and distressed" on hearing that his resentful brother Esau was on the road to meet him at the head of four hundred men. His "prayer and supplication" is among the most beautiful recorded in Scripture—a model that all should avail themselves of, seeing that the Holy Ghost moved Moses to write it down, and that it was so manifestly accepted. He begins by pleading the covenant of promise, and confessing his own demerit—"O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant." Then the expressive, comprehensive acknowledgment—the "thanksgiving" for amazing mercy—"For with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands." Between the two events, the former passage with his staff alone, a fugitive and in terror, seeking a home among strangers; and humbly asking of the Lord "food to eat, and raiment to put on," and this return, with wives and children, servants and camels, flocks and herds, and much wealth, what a tissue of wonderful benefits had his mind to glance over! Extreme brevity of language is consistent with elaborate thought; and here, no doubt, they were combined: for the very sight of that Jordan must have kindled a train of overpowering recollections: and the fact, "and now I am become two bands," bespoke all that had intervened. Moreover, Jacob had wronged Esau, through the wicked dependence on second causes that led his mother to doubt the Lord's fulfilment of his own decree concerning Jacob, when she heard Isaac promising the blessing to Esau; and nothing but the filial confidence of a child who was convinced by his Heavenly Father's many mercies that his sin was forgiven, could have strengthened him against the dread of a divine retribution, inflicted by means of him whom he had defrauded. Still he perseveres in

making his request known to God—"Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children." Then again, as if faith was striving hard against well-grounded alarm, and resolved to look from the sinfulness of the man to the unchangeable truth of God, he takes up again his opening plea, and abruptly adds—"And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." The more we study this lovely prayer, the more shall we find in it to instruct and encourage us. It seems to have produced in him the enjoyment promised to those who in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make their requests known unto God—even the peace which passeth all understanding; for we detect no symptom of further dread, or restlessness, or doubt in Jacob's conduct—"He lodged there that same night," and quietly proceeded to order his present for Esau. But before this interview, in the prospect of which he had drawn so nigh unto the Lord, He who is wont to give not only more than we deserve, but more than we desire, had a blessing to bestow, of unspeakable worth. We cannot, with all our sagacious guess-work, know one word more of the transaction than the Bible tells us: and after we have pondered on it to the utmost stretch of thought, we must rest content to be assured that after conducting his family over the ford, and being left alone, Jacob had an interview with one who is called "a man," but concerning whom he afterwards said, "I have seen God face to face." That the wrestling was real, though typical, we may be assured by the miraculous crippling of the determined patriarch, who seems to have believed he was striving against some mortal foe, until this wonder convinced him that it was a superior Being, and one whose blessing he could not dispense with. It was a small thing with the Lord to deliver him from Esau's dreaded, and probably meditated vengeance; he was to receive a more remarkable token that his prayer was accepted; and the name ISRAEL stands an ever-glorious memorial of what prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, will achieve. Well might

Shalom's altar of acknowledgment bear the title, "El-Elohe-Israel."

Again, when this mighty prince was near his end, and seeking an especial blessing on the sons of his beloved Joseph, how sweetly does he call up the memory of former mercies to strengthen his plea, and with a thankful reference to the past, look towards the future! There is something exceedingly beautiful in the language that he uses, when dwelling on by-gone times—"God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads."

But above all things, how incessantly does Moses bring this plea before the Lord, which we conceive to be mainly insisted on by the apostle, when urging "thanksgiving" as a part of every supplication. Time would fail to recount the instances to which we allude. On that first great provocation, immediately after the giving of the law, when the people had actually prevailed with Aaron to make them a molten image, and plunged at once into the most senseless idolatry, so that the Lord threatened to consume them, "Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand?" And again, when the guilty murmurings of the multitude exceedingly provoked the Lord, "Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even until now." In every instance Moses prevailed with God: and his uniform plea was a grateful recapitulation of the past.

The Psalms are full of this also: that beautiful passage in the lxxvii. Psalm is but a specimen of the whole tenor of their inspired strains—"Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? And I said, This is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings." This is true thanksgiving, acceptable unto the Lord. To speak of

His glory is exceedingly becoming; and "praise is comely." It is never overlooked by him. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his name." Yet, in the hour of calamity, we are far more inclined to number up our afflictions than our blessings: we rather make out a plea on the score of what we have deservedly suffered, than of what we have most undeservedly received. We keep a good account of his judgments, but a very imperfect one of his gracious dealings; and tell him how patiently we have stood under the present storm, rather than how long and how carelessly we had basked in the sunshine. This disposition too is exhibited in some examples that we must not overlook; for whatever comes between us and the Hearer of Prayer, should be detected and cast out as soon as possible. Satan is ever prepared to hand us a wet sponge, more particularly if it be one saturated with our own tears, for the truly Satanic purpose of wiping out the score of God's unutterable bounties to our bodies and our souls: and if it be not in his power to make us forget them, he has many devices to render the recollection of no effect; or even to work out of it an aggravation of the sin of unthankfulness—a sin to which we must all, more or less, plead guilty every day.

There is such a thing, too, as confessing the Lord's past goodness in a tone of reproach and defiance, rather than of reverential gratitude. So did the Israelites—"Can God furnish a table in the desert? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed: can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?" This "can he" is unequivocally and atheistically insulting: it calls down swift and severe punishment: but there is a "will he?" that we are perpetually thinking, if we dare not utter it; and which is no less wrongful and grievous to Him who has done so much for us. We have seen the consequence of David's unbelieving thought, "I shall now some day perish by the hand of Saul;" and perhaps when the history of our own hearts and lives is laid open to us in the clear light of a future existence, we shall find

that many a sorrow was encountered, many a good thing missed, through the secret indulgence of the same unthankful spirit. He delivers us out of six troubles, and when the seventh approaches, we begin to act, or to feel, as though he had no more than six deliverances to grant. This is a most vile habit of mind; and it is as universal as is the corruption of our nature, with but few instances of a total conquest over it by grace. Peter certainly experienced its power and effects before he began to sink: he had taken some steps on the water, which became as a rock at the word of the Lord, and so long as he simply trusted to that, he was safe: but he listened to the wind, stole a look at the waves, which were boisterous, and in the view of those second causes he wholly lost the experimental knowledge, gained in his own case and that of many others, of the infinite power and love which guarded him. His buoyancy was coeval with his faith; and if there had not been One at hand, whose compassion was as immeasurable and inexhaustible as his sovereignty, Peter would, as Pharaoh, have sunk like lead in the mighty waters. His peril is explained in four words—“Wherefore didst thou doubt?” He prayed to be enabled to tread the waves, but he added not thanksgiving to the prayer. This is worthy of remembrance; because we are so very apt to approach the Lord as though he had never before bestowed on us any remarkable benefaction, instead of taking pattern by the prophet—“I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses.”

CHAPTER V.

“FAITH cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” This is spoken of saving faith, and it is equally applicable to that of which we now treat. For, having once believed unto salvation, we need a

continual reference to the holy Scriptures to sanction what in such unworthy creatures might otherwise be felt as presumption. How sweet it is to be told, “Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” This is the root of all our confidence: he that inhabiteth eternity dwelleth also with those who have humbled themselves at the foot of the cross, who have received the gift of repentance and remission of sins. Henceforth, Satan, whose captives they were, pursues them as fugitives escaped from his yoke, and though to bring them again into bondage is beyond his power, he harasses them in every possible way, and to the utmost limit that is permitted. In proportion to their contrition is their sense of what their former iniquities have deserved at God’s hands: they cannot realize the fact that the past is actually blotted out from God’s remembrance, and they inwardly mourn over the true record preserved in their own. Humility teaches them also to measure the awful distance between themselves, poor grovelling worms, and the high and lofty One: between the creature man, whose breath is in his nostrils, who is as a shadow that departeth, and Him who inhabiteth eternity: between a being so deeply polluted, so continually in many things offending still, whose fleshly nature perpetually lusts against the Spirit, being able to do no good thing, and Him whose name is Holy. Can it be that such a one is indeed looked after, and cared for, and has every little incident of his daily walk ordered and overruled for good? Yes: the Word of God speaks to the principle of faith, implanted first through its own precious page, and tells him that the LORD dwells with him, and is to him a Father, and owns him as a son—dwells in him, hallowing him as a temple, and being to him a present God. O the depth of the riches of such unfathomable wisdom and love! If it were rightly borne in mind, every assault of Satan, either from without or within, would but be as the little obstacles that beset an infant’s path, inducing it, as near as possible, to look up in its tender pa-

rent's face, and stretch out its hands to be lifted over the stumbling-stone.

And why does the little child do this? because it has ever found the parent's arm a strong support, and the parent's eye a sufficient guide. Perchance when its own inexperience has magnified some very trifling thing into a formidable obstruction, the tender parent may bid it exert itself, and may stand watchfully by, while the feeble creature puts forth an effort to surmount the difficulty, because such practice is needful, such exercise good; but what fond father ever yet stood passively by, while his babe broke its neck in attempting an impossibility? It is not to be endured by an earthly parent that his child should so wrongfully mistrust him: but we heap these insulting doubts against our Father in heaven; and if Satan can do no more than frighten us into such offensive unbelief, he does not wholly lose his labour. Yet further, in condescension to our weakness, we are told of an intermediate agency, beautifully adapted to our wants: angelic beings, like ourselves creatures, but unlike us sinless, holy, obedient creatures, abiding in God's presence, and wholly opposed to the hosts of darkness, are brought before our view in every part of the Bible, and it is said of them, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation?" "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." We have no right to inquire into the particulars of God's providential arrangements concerning his people: enough, that He careth for us; we may safely cast all our care upon Him; yet, most graciously, and with excess of condescending pity, He has even permitted our weak thoughts to ascend, as it were, by a ladder, to the height where His visible glory dwells; and to view the intervening space peopled by myriads of happy beings, of immense power, deep knowledge, and abounding in love to man. We are told of many instances where these have been employed as means of mercies that could have been no less effectually enjoyed without any acquaintance with

those means, had not the Lord seen good to reveal them for our comfort. Peter might have awoke, between his sleeping guards, without being conscious of a stroke on the side: he might have felt his chains fall off, and have taken advantage of that miracle to walk forth through the opened gate, with a full assurance that it was the Lord's doing, and quite ignorant that an angel was the instrument employed: but the revelation was made to him, by means of his bodily senses; and through his testimony, recorded by Luke, it is also made to us, opening to us a contemplation of most encouraging character. Satan and his infernal crew make us feel their presence and power often enough: God has given us proof that they are not unresisted in their hateful work against us, even by creatures of their own order; and while He, spiritually, takes up his abode within us, they, personally and severally keep guard around. Yet, faithless creatures! we often feel alone, and afraid; careful and troubled about many things; walking in darkness and doubt, and faltering at every difficulty, as though we were left to struggle alone, and through a host of foes on the path that leads to heaven!

Moses believed, and by his faith was saved from the wrath to come: Moses endured, as seeing him who is invisible. This is the grand secret of enduring to the end. To set God always before us, is to be secure from falling: to know that He is on our right hand is the way to be never moved. There is, evidently, a very great lack of this simple faith in the church. Passages of Scripture given to excite and nourish such blessed confidence in regard to temporal things, are too exclusively spiritualized; and instead of rejoicing in the sunshine of a prosperous season, many go about looking for what they call a cross, and doubting God's love to their souls, because he does not afflict their bodies. Let, however, some heavy calamity overtake them, in a quarter where they neither expected nor wished to find it, and they are tempted either to make a Saviour of their cross, or to faint utterly under the affliction. A right understanding of God's dealings with man would enable us more confidently to look up for returning sunshine under the storm, and perhaps prevent our prying so curiously for rising

clouds when the sky is clear. Sometimes Christians are afraid of being happier than God chooses them to be: they fancy the domestic blessings with which his loving-kindness has surrounded them, are snares to draw their hearts from him; and that the chilling of their natural affections is a branch of duty. No marvel if such are unable to realize His fatherly regards to them under the struggles that they are occasionally called to make. They have faith in his saving, but not enough in his providential love. Moses preferred to suffer affliction with the people of God, at a time when God's people were all sorely afflicted, and only His enemies prospered; but when the time came for those people to enter triumphantly and possess the land flowing with milk and honey, and to commence an era of great temporal enjoyment, Moses felt it a bitter chastisement to be withheld from sharing their altered lot. He had transgressed, and so publicly too, and in such an exceedingly solemn and important matter, daring to interpose his own intemperate language when working a miracle by divine power and command, that it was needful he should be very publicly and severely punished. Yet, for once that we hear of Moses' fervent desire to enter into Canaan, and share the triumph of his conquering people, we hear fifty times of Moses choosing to suffer affliction with them in their abasement. We thus come to have strange thoughts, as though the heaviness that endures for a night were our portion more fitly than the joy that comes in the morning; and dwelling on the chastisement that our Father sees needful to inflict on every beloved son, we sometimes forget that judgment is his strange work, that he does not afflict willingly, and that the earthly parent, whose conduct is referred to as an illustration, does not habitually scourge his children, but delights in wiping away the tears he has been obliged to call forth, and in seeing their faces again dressed in smiles, while gladness surrounds their path, and the fruits of his loving correction are willing obedience, peace, and joy.

It is generally understood that the Christian dispensation is a direct reverse of the Mosaic: that the latter held out the reward of temporal prosperity only as an incentive to obedience, and a proof of the

Lord's favour, while the former insures present tribulation to every child of God, and points only to a future state for that happiness which man naturally desires. For man was made to be happy, and sorrow is no part of his original inheritance; it was brought into the world by sin, and while sin remains, sorrow will cleave to him; but it by no means follows that when sin is hated, sorrow should be loved, or invited, or considered a necessary appendage. The world, indeed, loves sin, and hates sorrow; as the drunkard loves his bottle, and hates the headache: but we really allow trouble to cleave to us much longer than is necessary, because we pre-judge the Lord's decrees, and do not go boldly to him, and ask for its removal. A good man, for instance, is laid by suffering under some acute or lingering disease, that compels him to remain a secluded prisoner. In this state God manifests his presence, makes his word very precious, bestows much divine teaching on his suffering servant, and thus constrains him to cry out, "It is good for me to be afflicted!" Under this impression, and delighted to continue a learner, and to enjoy such constant manifestations of God's love to his soul, he learns perhaps to be content with his state, content to remain inactive, and, like the man out of whom Legion had been cast, he desires to be always looking on and listening to his divine Master. Now of this believer we would say, that he ought to make his hourly prayer to God to be restored to such a state as should enable him actively to promote his Master's cause among others. If his bodily ill be absolutely incurable, let him rest and rejoice in the Lord, and patiently await the appointed time until his change come: but if there be instances of others similarly afflicted having regained their health and strength, let it not be said of him that he received not because he asked not: these are not the times for a single labourer to sit idle in the vineyard; weeds are springing up with preternatural luxuriance, stones are flung over the wall as fast as the enemy can collect and hurl them: little foxes are creeping through every crevice to spoil the tender grapes, and the prince of the power of the air is breathing his fiercest blasts to rend down the branches from their props, and soil their

honour in the dust. This is the main object of what we now write, to call on every individual for such an exercise of "faith in God," as shall fit and incline that individual to work in his vineyard without faltering: to drive away whatever tempts, to pray away whatever opposes, and with all the powers that nature and grace combined can furnish for the work, to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

We are not speculating how to fill a certain number of pages, so as to add a volume to the already overstocked libraries of the religious world; repeating in other words what has been far better said by wiser people, and giving Christians an excuse to sit at ease while we prose to them: No; UP AND BE DOING, is the message we bring, and whatever part of this little volume does not tend to such an object, would be far better placed behind the fire than under the press.

Our starting-point was the withered fig-tree; and wherefore was it withered? because it bore no fruit, but leaves only. The lesson thereby inculcated by our Lord was two-fold; his word to the worthless but luxuriant impostor, caused it to perish: his word to his weak but honest disciples strengthened their faith, and quickened their courage. He had wrought a miracle, and his instruction to them bore upon the mighty office to which they were called, even that of advancing his kingdom among men, and successfully combating all the power of the enemy; and one of the greatest obstacles to their triumphant progress, we believe and have stated to be a habitual looking on man's part, to those things which are generally regarded as necessary means, but which are not, cannot be in themselves essential to the fulfilment of any one thing which the Lord purposes to perform.

For three hundred years the church in these realms has been in a state of comparative repose. By the church we mean, of course, the general company of believers. When a soul was called out of darkness, to whatsoever communion the individual might belong, there was no actual danger incurred to the body, unless Popery had held captive the ransomed one, and in that case, as from Paganism of old, a degree of danger was menaced. Still no legalized persecution was known; and

the conflict entered upon by the child of God was principally against a subdued manifestation of the world and the devil; the flesh alone retaining its hostile power, unmitigated and uncontrolled by outward circumstances. There were no dungeon and stake; no confiscation and exile; nothing but the polite sneer of public scorn, and the surly rebuke, or bitter scoff of domestic opposition. Satan, unable to wield the world as of old, directed his fiery darts principally at the spirit; and the poor harassed Christian often found it harder to battle in the closet unseen, than his fathers did to witness a good confession amid blazing faggots. Adapted to such a state of things was the spiritual comfort and admonition which they who had themselves the same ordeal to pass, drew from the Bible for the benefit of their brethren: and to this day we find the pulpit and the press pursuing generally the same track. Quiet disquisition, and theological research, and amicable controversy on points that the church had full leisure to moot, these are the standard themes of our modern religious literature. We would not set them aside, for they are truly valuable; but we would remind God's children that other times are already come round, other scenes beginning to be enacted; and God has other services for his people to engage in than those of reading or writing, or indeed preaching, after the fashion of the preceding generation.

The whole world is astir; and after such a sort, that we cannot liken it to the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters, to produce harmony, and breathe rejoicing life. It rather resembles the working of volcanic elements, eagerly watched and promoted by Satan, for the sudden rending of all that is fair and calm. We see a prodigious increase of knowledge applied to man's use in every possible branch of art and science; but for the promotion of God's glory. Divinely taught, Noah prepared an ark, elucidating a principle by which his posterity have, for thousands of years, found a highway over the trackless water; but now they have seized the element, and yoked it to their chariots, and laugh to scorn the fleetness of the horse, as with giddy velocity they make a transit over space, such as never before entered the imagination of man as a prac-

ticable thing. By much craft, and labour, and delicacy of touch, and nice arrangement of artificial colours, a studious portion of the community have long since acquired and cherished the art of preserving the natural appearance of an individual; so that, when both the artist and his subject had mouldered into dust, the semblance of the one survived to keep alive the fame of the other. But now, man makes the sun his limner; and under the blaze of one day's beams, more is done in the art, and far more perfectly, than the longest life of the most laborious student ever sufficed to accomplish. By a third process, a similar adaptation of existing elements and natural principles, with a little aid from man's adventurous hand, and a trifling outlay of his limited means, the most ordinary homely metal shines forth, almost instantaneously in burnished gold. Every day evolves some new marvel, or tests the applicability of modern discoveries to some branch of production, where thousands have been accustomed to earn their daily bread, producing the same results by protracted manual labour which now are effected, as in a moment, by machinery and chemical propulsion. All this is working a mighty revolution in men's minds and circumstances: fostering pride, satiating avarice, and promoting luxury in one class; while in another it engenders want, foments discontent, and even forces on them the idleness that is the parent of mischief. In both cases God is forgotten: the giddy whirl of exciting occupation on the one side, combined with the lust of gain, that evermore grows by what it feeds on, thrust religion away as an unprofitable interruption; while on the other it is shunned as a substitute mockingly offered by the rich in lieu of what the body craves; and as a check on the lawless purposes with which Satan has filled the minds of the poor.

So much for external changes, and their effects on the surface: how powerfully they bear on the position and the duty of the Christian, how loudly they call for that faith in God which nerves him, in defiance of second causes, to do valiantly in an evil day, may be next shown.

CHAPTER VI.

THERE are no circumstances in which a servant of God can be placed, where he will not find in the Holy Scriptures both a direction and an example as to what he shall do. Viewing the present position of the world, we have in Daniel a prophetic declaration, worthy of especial remark at this time—"They that understand among the people shall instruct many;" and for a pattern of most persevering zeal, faithfulness, and fearfulness in a very evil day, we have the prophet Jeremiah.

The sins of Judah had increased, and their provocations multiplied, until the Lord saw right to visit them most severely. They were His people, professing His name, and holding the sacred depository of his truth, though, alas! they held that truth in unrighteousness; and it behoved him to convince the whole world that their ways were as displeasing unto Him as their professed faith was according to His word. He therefore raised up prophets, to show the people of Israel their transgressions, and to warn them of coming destruction, unless they would wholly turn from their evil ways and live. The message was slighted, the messengers persecuted, and at length the Lord made known his determination to deliver them to the sword and to captivity, their cities to the spoiler, and even their glorious Temple, where His presence so long had dwelt, to the flames. This was expressly revealed, and no amount of individual repentance and holiness could avert the national ruin of an offending people. This was known to Jeremiah; but he also knew that each Israelite who turned to God would be personally dealt with according to his faith; and he never ceased to warn, to exhort, to show the terrors of the Lord, and to magnify his mercy. The king on the throne, and the humblest of the populace were alike addressed by this intrepid preacher; nor could any measure of cruelty practised upon him silence his testimony, cool his zeal, or diminish his love. True, he was directly inspired for the purpose, and what he did was by the Lord's command and in the Lord's strength; but are we not under a like obligation to deliver to our offending fellow-countrymen the message confi-

ded to us, who make the Word of God our study, and who see in all that passes around us something similar to the sin of Israel? Should we not gird up the loins of our mind, and, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, vouchsafed unto ourselves, at least *try* to minister the gift to others? There is something very inspiring in the theory; but the practice how hard! Ministers addressing their flocks, parents among their children, teachers surrounded by their class, or public writers with the pen in their hands, may find it an easy matter, and pleasant as profitable so to do; but when we look round upon the multitudes who cross our daily path, or whom in some way we have opportunities of addressing, do we not often shrink and falter; and while the Spirit of God strives in our hearts, and would open our lips, do we not, like Moses in his hour of unbelief, secretly say, Lord, I am not eloquent: send by the hand of whom thou wilt send—send not by me this message of mercy to the fallen, and deliverance to the slave?

Although not with all, it surely is the case with a great majority of believers, that when they fall in with a stranger, and make inquiry concerning his spiritual or carnal character, if it be of the latter class, they feel a chill rather than an awakening of kindly affection towards him, as though there neither was nor could be any unity of spirit, and their intercourse must necessarily be confined to worldly, if not to foolish and vain conversation. Faith in God would suggest that if this fellow-sinner is ever awakened to a sense of his lost estate, and driven for refuge to the hope set before him in the Gospel, which hope *we* have, as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast, it will most probably be accomplished by means of some word spoken in season; and the office is open to us. But second causes interpose just as we are half persuaded to stretch forth our hands for the blessing. It is ill-timed; it may seem ill-mannered; he is not an encouraging subject for the experiment; other means of grace are open to him, and if God has so long spoken in vain to him, how can such as we hope to prevail? Perhaps the opportunity is not a good one; we may desire a more convenient season, and resolve to watch for it. By means of such ex-

cuses, what a vast amount of good is left undone by God's people! It is Satan "forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved," and he is the only party to whom our unfaithful conduct affords satisfaction.

If this be applicable, as undoubtedly it is, to the meeting of a believer with one yet dead in trespasses and sins, how much more so when the poor creature before us is awake to the value of his soul, to the importance of eternal things, and is earnestly endeavouring to enter the kingdom of heaven by a path that we know leads to everlasting destruction! Surely the spirit of Jeremiah is what every Christian should especially strive after, while many a nominal house of God is polluted with idols, and the name of the Queen of Heaven invocated in all our streets. For these things they who did, and they who suffered them to be done in the city of the Lord, went into captivity together; and God was glorified in their punishment, as before he had been in their exaltation. Can we read the record of His mercies to Israel, of their obstinate transgressions, and impending ruin, and not feel that it would have been a privilege to arrest the step of any dweller in Jerusalem, to plead with him the wonders wrought of old for the redemption of his people, and to reclaim, if it might be, his heart from the abominable paths of idolatrous transgression? How, then, can we go forth from our closets, and carelessly, or at least inactively, regard the situation of our domestics, our worldly connexions and acquaintance, or of any one who, calling himself or herself a Christian, lives in daily communion with Antichrist? We speak this more especially in reference to Popery, dominant as it is over the vast majority in Ireland, and sweeping through England with the violence of a flood: but "there are many Antichrists," and with out dethroning the "Man of Sin," from his awful eminence in guilt, we may apply the character to other systems—even to all that exalteth itself against Christ, whether it be the earthly wisdom that is from beneath, the oppositions of science, falsely so called, or the unsound theology which would teach us to attribute to appointed means of grace that efficacy which is found in the Holy Spirit's work alone.

Among these many Antichrists holding rule over such as profess to pay serious regard to the things of eternity, would our lot have fallen, had not the Lord watched over us, and guided us to his fold, and guarded us from the wolves that prowl even there; and when we consider the destruction that shall assuredly overtake all His enemies, and that He will detect an enemy even when disguised as his most devoted adherent, surely no motive can be lacking to urge us to that practical test and evidence of our faith which action alone can furnish; that we should never retire to our nightly pillow with the sentence to write against ourselves, "This day I have done nothing towards plucking a soul from Satan, or extending the kingdom of my Lord."

Indeed, if Christ's kingdom were never to be established on earth till we prevail to set it up, Satan would have little to fear. There are so many divisions, bickerings, jealousies, and strife-engendering questions evermore diverting the attention of Christians, that they have scarcely leisure to look after their own souls, much less after those of their neighbours. Antichrist in all his forms, they do indeed reject: they are true to the first principles, and will not compromise the essentials of truth: but who shall enumerate the conflicting partialities that keep in perpetual commotion the little flock of Christ! We have Episcopalians and Non-Episcopalians; Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, and some who abjure them all. In every one of these separate bodies, or rather in these disjointed members of the same body, we have two or more parties, carrying on a little dispute of their own, concerning non-essential doctrines, or minute points of ecclesiastical government and discipline, with as much zeal and earnestness as though it rested with them to decide what precise form the church should assume and retain to the end of time. Few, very few there are, among even those who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, who do not look on the gaining of a proselyte to their own particular system from some other equally orthodox, as a matter sufficiently important to excuse the neglect of an infinitely higher work; and the man who should persuade Dr. Cooke or

Dr. Urwick to enter the Established Church, or he who could induce Mr. M'Neile to eschew it, would probably be tempted to rejoice in his achievement more than if he had stopped some ragged mendicant on his way to the idolatrous mass-house, and brought him into the true fold. Not that he would willingly leave the latter undone; but the former might seem a sufficient plea for postponing it to a time that perhaps would never arrive.

If this be an unjust suspicion, if any reader warmly repels it as unmerited, let him rejoice, in his exemption from a wide-spreading evil, and hasten to devote to the Lord's cause the energies, the opportunities that He has given. Moses was never more meetly employed than when he said to Hobab, "Come thou with us and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Even that Israel whom He chose; the people whom He formed for Himself that they might show forth His praise; and whose office we shall best exercise, while enjoying their spiritual privileges, by inviting those who know not the Lord aright to taste and see how gracious He is.

That things should long continue in their present position is manifestly impossible. It is spring-tide with Popery in England; every day adds something to the advantages gained, and to whatever distance the boundary may be removed which says to those proud waves, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther," it is quite evident they will roll on till that impassable barrier be reached. The class led away are also of a rather high grade; people who contribute their money to schools and mass-houses, and then go to hear the thanksgiving sermons of a grateful priesthood, who, in return for their carnal gifts would fain press on them the spiritual toys of Rome: people too, who, not content with the good land which the Lord gave them, and in which their fathers gloried to dwell, have wandered abroad, spending their money in Popish countries and their time in Popish society, until they have lost the sensitiveness of real Protestantism, and "grown familiar with the face," are prepared to link themselves to what they should never have even looked upon. Another class consists of those who have been inoculated in their own church

or their own college, with the virus of Rome;—the gentlemen who read, and the gentlemen who preach, and the ladies who read and hear Tractarianism. Likewise, the frequenters of theatres, who having been present when such compositions as the *Stabat Mater* were performed on the stage, are tempted to try the more exciting effect of the same sentimentalism, amid the scenes for which it was originally intended, and with all the romantic accompaniments of an ecclesiastical melodrama. These fall away rapidly, and no small advantage does the enemy gain by such accessions: for they, having their understandings wholly darkened by the ignorance that is in the apostate mind, and having lost what little knowledge they might before possess, are filled with a blind zeal to decoy others into the snare; while their perverted possessions are dedicated to the purposes of building up more temples, to be filled with the worshippers they shall help to allure. Such is the real, existing state of things in Protestant England; and in Scotland the troubled condition of the church offers many facilities to the crafty workers of evil. Their progress is not, indeed, so rapid as in England, but according to their own returns, it is very great, and increasing. The open revival of the order of Jesuits, and their public settlement in our most populous towns, for the avowed purpose of spreading their doctrines, is a feature of the times, indicating a coming struggle of no common kind; for where did these troubles of the world ever find entrance without overturning every foundation within their reach? In Ireland we look for other results: we know that Popery prevails in the sister countries by means of such artifices and assumptions of character as would in Ireland be laughed to scorn. There, it is known: its features, its actings, its officers, have been before the public eye too long and too broadly to admit of any disguise. The ignorance, the crime, the destitution that wait on its steps, are familiar to every eye, impressed on every mind. Its priesthood, fierce, brawling demagogues, accustomed to rule by violence, and with their frank natures (for they cannot help being Irishmen still) utterly unsuited to the polished guile of Italian hypocrisy, cannot enact the parts so successfully sustained by their

English neighbours, who have, to a man, doffed their nationality, and assumed the foreigner; and so far from Popery extending its sway in Ireland at this time, there is good ground for hoping that the cloud will roll away from her long-darkened sky; and too probably it will rest again upon the eastern horizon whence first it rose to obscure her morning beam.

In reference, then, to Ireland, we would say to every Christian, "Have faith in God;" and without pausing to calculate the bearing of secondary causes which you can never rightly comprehend, go forward and help in the great work of delivering that beautiful country from the curse that has for many centuries rested upon it. There is peril, even in the escape of men's minds from the thralldom of Popery, lest they should leap from one form of infidelity to another. This marks the crisis; and it calls on the Irish Christian in a very peculiar manner to show forth the praise of his God, so that all may read in him an Epistle not to be misunderstood. Taking heed, then, first to our own walk before men, let us next consider the wonders that faith has wrought, even from of old; looking at the amazing effects that have resulted through means seemingly the most inadequate to produce any national effect at all; and perhaps this, with a lively sense of our unutterable privileges of access to God, and of his readiness to help to the uttermost whatsoever is undertaken for the glory of His name; and of the many, many more who are with us, than there can possibly be against us; seeing that under His guidance "one of you shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight;" perhaps all this may stimulate believers to join in such a work as, if accomplished, will far, far outshine the highest achievements of mortal power, and fill the hearts of millions with rejoicing praise.

Israel delivered from the bondage of Egypt, journeying through the wilderness, and reaching the promised land, has always been regarded as a type of the Church spiritually considered, and of every individual believer also. But Ireland, as a nation, has appeared in a peculiar manner to share the destiny of Israel as a nation. Perhaps we should rather say, the Irish as a people; for it is principally among the

native, aboriginal race, that we find the bondage of Babylon—the figurative Babylon and literal Rome—pressing down their souls. It is because they rest beside “the waters of Babylon” that their beloved harps hang on the willow trees; and the Lord’s song does not issue from their lips, because the land of their birth has become through the demon of Popery a strange land to its children. If they are impoverished, degraded, despised, reckoned as the least among the European nation, it is because the power of Babylon grinds them down, and the tyrant of Babylon holds them in a fetter which they cannot break. If the friends who truly love and would serve them are counted enemies, and the faith that would save them an accursed thing, and they are taught to labour for what would end in their utter extinction, it is because they learn from the cradle to call evil good, and good evil; to put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; to love darkness, and to hate the light. This is what baffles every attempt to tranquillize, to conciliate them: this is what saddens the heart of benevolence, and wearies the hand of beneficence, and calls for an armed force to protect her loyal and peaceable classes from those who ought to be the best defence of the privileges that they enjoy. Is it to be thus always? Has it been revealed from heaven that the fate of the Irish is to be that of the Amalekites, and their latter end that they perish for ever? Have God’s servants been enjoined to “Pray not for this people,” or commanded to get up from among them, that He may consume them? We know it is not so: we know, and we cherish the knowledge, that in every corner of the land some remains may be traced of the pure, scriptural Church which once flourished in what was justly called the isle of saints, long before Rome had prostituted the word saint to fill her worthless Kalender; and, indeed, before Rome became antichristian: extensively, too, as the people have apostatized, the Lord has never quite removed the candlestick from Ireland. There have always been witnesses to his truth in the land; and at this time the light is streaming most effulgently from many candlesticks: not all of the same pattern, perhaps, but all lighted at the same holy fire. Does this look like

discouragement? No; it is with Ireland as with Israel; the glory of the Lord is beginning to arise upon her, and her children, so long alienated from Him, and from their own good land, (though not, like Israel, in bodily exile,) shall again inhabit its borders, and dwell in the peace that Christ only can give.

Such is the language of faith; and whatever contradicts it can only refer to second causes for a warrant to disbelieve. The Lord’s people will never want a Pella to flee to, when destruction comes on an ungodly generation; and why Ireland should not be destined to this character—why it should not AGAIN become what it once was among the nations of Europe, no possible reason can be assigned to satisfy any one who believes “that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.” The basest of men, even “the man of sin,” has long been set up over Ireland; and but for the goodness of God in always preserving there a remnant, numerically insignificant, but upheld by Him, to keep in check the power of that enemy, he would have rendered her enslaved millions the scourge of all surrounding lands. He can now rend away the possession from the usurper, and restore the kingdom to its true monarch, Christ; and to say that he will not so do, until the failure of our renewed efforts proves that the time is not yet come, is, to use the mildest term, a very presumptuous and premature extinction of the hope that we are permitted and commanded to cherish.

But to what does all this lead? To a conclusion that since a great crisis, affecting the British empire, is unquestionably approaching, and since it is no less unquestionable that Popery is the foremost in profiting by this eventful movement, we ought, as upon new ground, so with a new and vigorous effort of faith, to put our hands to the work; and so to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation that every individual shall, or may hear them. The summons, “Come out of her, my people; be ye not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues,” should once, if but once, resound from north to south, and from east to west. And this might be done—would be done—if every reader of

these pages resolved, in the strength of the Lord, to do some one thing towards it, not merely by the giving of money, but by personal effort. Societies existing for the instruction of the people ought to receive continued, yea, redoubled support; and Bibles, Tracts, Handbills, should be circulated in abundance; but, mingled, as the population is, there cannot be a Protestant who has not some opportunity of speaking, *vir-a-voce*, to a Romanist; or a Christian who may not find many, evidently dead in trespasses and sins, both among equals and inferiors, to whom to speak of the kingdom of heaven. What seems to be required now, as an evidence of faith in God, is that each who is really on the Lord's side should *show himself to be so* in a way that cannot be mistaken: that the master should openly speak to his servants, the employer to his labourers, the landlord to his tenants, and every one to his neighbour. This may be dangerous, and let those who are afraid hold back; but let them also remember, that such fear is nothing else than lurking infidelity; that no man can possibly set on them to hurt them, while, commissioned by the Lord, they proclaim His kingdom, and seek to win back rebels to their allegiance, and to save immortal souls alive; unless it be specially so ordered for the trial of their faith, and to show how ready the preachers of the cross of Christ are to bear that cross, in any way in which it pleases their Lord to lay it upon them.

And have not English Christians a twofold motive to aid this good work, in every possible way that the absent can assist it in? Besides the universal obligation to promote the cause of our Master wherever opportunity is given, we have the consciousness that England, when herself enslaved by Popery, flung the same accursed fetter over Ireland; but neglected to remove it when her own emancipation was mercifully wrought. This forms a plea of perpetual force for English justice and sympathy with the oppressed slaves of Rome in the sister isle; the other argument we must draw from the fearful decay of Protestantism in England, where the company of real, unwavering Protesters, while it certainly increases in energy and decision, has diminished in numbers to an extent truly painful; and,

to judge by the countenance given in high places to those who are gradually overturning the whole fabric of Scriptural truth, we may soon have to act upon our Lord's injunction, "When they persecute you in one city, flee to another," on so extensive a scale, that the little flock must seek beyond the limits of their own land for a refuge where to enjoy in freedom the ordinances that they love. The prudent man, foreseeing the evil, will betimes look about for a hiding-place, and deem it no idle task to employ himself in preparing one. The persecution that seems to await vital godliness will not, probably, touch the lives of its professors at once; but it will touch their consciences, their privileges, and their homes. To "wear out the saints of the Most High," by a thousand harassing afflictions, is no less a part of the character of Rome, than it is to fill her cup when she can, and make herself drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

CHAPTER VII.

To write treatises on faith, or to preach sermons on the same important subject, is no new thing in the church; but though what has been said aforesaid on saving faith must be applicable to the end, wherever there is an ear to hear it, still, since the promise stands fast, "As thy day so shall thy strength be," we are called on to mark the peculiarities of the day in which we live, that we may ask strength and put forth efforts commensurate with the occasion.

This is a day of perplexity; it is a day of trouble, of rebuke, and blasphemy. Evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse; and the ministers of Satan, transformed into the appearance of ministers of righteousness, are creeping into houses, yea, into the pulpits, where only a pure faith is commissioned to be taught. The great apostacy is spreading its conquests by means which were never before so effectually brought into operation; and the gospel of Christ is perverted, and the kingdom of Christ assailed among us. Are his people to make no unusual effort

to oppose this vigorous assault? Is each believer to wrap himself up in selfishness, and, blessing God that, come what will, he at least has a sure foundation on the Rock of Ages, to look unmoved while his kindred, his neighbours, his country, all perish? Surely not: our faith requires rousing, that we may do more than stand on the defensive while an enemy hems us round, whom, by a vigorous sally, we might drive for ever from our shore.

Let us then look at some of the encouraging instances recorded in God's word, where the prowess of faith has been exhibited, not only in a spiritual victory over the prince of darkness, but in the deliverance of many from those evils which he by his agents brings upon men. The apostle is not using figurative language when he says, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days." Those walls were a great hindrance to Israel's advance; in fact, the fall of Jericho in the promised land, was as essential to the progress of Israel, as the fall of Popery in Ireland is to the well-being of the Irish people; and the Lord, if he had seen good, could have crumbled into dust those bulwarks, even as he rolled away the waters of Jordan, without any human participation, and caused Israel to march over the fragments as they did over the river's bed; but it pleased him to make his people the agents in this overthrow, and that without the brandishing of a carnal weapon, or the application of any bodily strength. And what he could have done in a moment, he was pleased to make a work of seven days; the seventh being one of seven-fold effort. The most pusillanimous individual in Jericho could scarcely have been alarmed by seeing a company of strangers march round their walls, in deep silence, uttering no word, using no gesture of menace, but with serious look and solemn step compassing the city, preceding and following what must have been a strange, unmeaning object to the idolatrous beholders, the ark of the Lord, with its seven peaceful-looking priests, blowing with rams' horns. Whatever feeling might be excited by the first appearance of such a company, so employed, the unwearied repetition of the spectacle for six days, the coming and the going of that company, without any ap-

proach to a hostile movement, must have been a theme of ridicule to the ungodly inhabitants of the place; and when the seventh day arrived, and early dawn saw the army on their march to commence the seven-fold circuit, how little did the drowsy inhabitants of Jericho suspect what would be its ending!

The time was now ripe, and the trial of Israel's faith and patience increased. The city was very large; and to encircle it so often must have been both tedious and disheartening, particularly as the enemy would not fail to scoff at their seemingly absurd and chimerical expectations. In proportion as the hour of full success drew nigh would be the increase of the city's confidence; every additional step taken by the peaceable besiegers tended to show how incompetent they were to an exploit that would require immense military prowess, energy, and skill; and Jericho, no doubt, looking down on her feeble assailants, was full of great Babylon's vaunt—"I set a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." The sequel was a stupendous work: a long, loud blast issued from the trumpets—Joshua gave the word, "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city!"—and at the voice of that thundering shout the mighty walls fell down, and the inspired successor of Moses, looking on the prostrate ruins, pronounced them accursed. The anathema is very strong, and is extended to him who should attempt to rebuild the city which God had overthrown; nor was any spoil allowed to be taken, nor any temporal advantage to accrue to the soldiers of the Lord.

Now, such faith as can lay hold on the word of God, and can believe that what he has caused to be written for us is available to the full extent of our need, and can realize the truth that his arm is not shortened since it wrought all these wonders—that faith will find in the recital of Jericho's fall something to grasp, as a precious acquisition. In the means employed for the removal of the formidable obstruction, we see the people fully bent to do whatsoever was ordered for them to perform; and the service required was to exhibit the ark of the testimony before those who knew not its priceless worth: to speak no word of their own, to strike no stroke with carnal weapon, but to sound aloud and per-

overingly the trumpet-toned proclamation ordained of God. While they obeyed the command, the LORD HIMSELF undermined the walls of the city, taking away the foundations which were not His, and reducing them, unseen and unsuspected, to such a state of fragile insecurity, that, untouched by mortal hand, they fell at the breath of the human voice, and crumbled into nothing. Is it not so that we have for a long period been encompassing the spiritual Jericho, exhibiting the testimony of God, even the Bible, wherein is contained all that we know of the ark, and of that to which the ark served but as a foreshadowing type; and sounding aloud, not any words of our own, but those which the Spirit of God has supplied, for the destruction of this hostile power? Are we not told to continue our work in language as plain as Joshua made use of to encourage the Israelites? "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Exhorting all men everywhere to repent, and to believe the gospel." "Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." "Line must be upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept." In the morning sow thy seed, and at evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that; or whether they shall be alike good." These, and a multitude of similar encouragements, have hitherto led us on, in confidence that when the Lord's time came, He would work, and who should let it? But now events speak to us eloquently of a period when the battle rages so closely between light and darkness, and the enemy is gaining such accessions of strength, that we may expect the Lord to help his people against those who will otherwise be too strong for them: and we would, by faith, accelerate this deliverance—we would throw seven days' work into one, and rise up early, and carry it on diligently, and cause the sound that has been so long heard to increase both in loudness and duration—we would make a vigorous, simultaneous effort, and leave the issue with the Lord.

It is certain that Popery has been most extensively undermined within some years. The disclosures first made in

London by an Irish clergyman, respecting the confessional and other abominations, and followed up in Ireland, have wrought secretly but powerfully. The Irish Scriptures, quietly circulated among the people, have loosened the whole fabric in a measure not suspected, by abstracting from it isolated portions in so many quarters, that it will cripple the actings of the body as a whole. The temperance movement, from which so much evil was intended, and to a great extent has arisen, will also be overruled to immense good, if Christians be on the alert to avail themselves of it; for the right use of their natural reason is so essential to the recovery of the people out of the snare of Popery, that it is marvellous the priesthood ventured upon the experiment of allowing them to think. Political agitation alone keeps the deluded mass together: and but for that the yoke would be lightly thrown off. The foundation of Popery in Ireland is now altogether different from what it was before the revival of true religion among Protestants; and very far removed from that on which it is rearing a proud edifice in England. In all this we read a promise that redoubled effort to shake to the dust her accursed battlements, will not be in vain; for Ireland who never persecuted the Jew, Ireland who never was reckoned among the ten Papal kingdoms, Ireland who has had the grace given to be most munificently liberal, and most actively zealous in promoting the cause of Christ abroad and at home, will not, in the Lord's controversy with the nations, be forgotten or cast away. We have no right to assume that it will be so: unbelief alone can suggest such an expectation, and if not to be cast away, she must be rescued from Popery; and who shall come to the rescue, if those in these lands who love the Lord do not?

Truth is a very aggressive principle; it does not stand still to be attacked, but marches on, under the conduct of faith, to assail the enemy, to make conquests, and to recover what falsehood has stolen, or violence wrested away. Among us, truth is far too quiescent for the juncture at which we are arrived; too contented to stand on the defensive, and merely to hold fast what she has, without labouring to drive out error wherever it exists. Where

a contrary rule prevails, how wonderful are the advances made! These views are not extravagant, nor these hopes unfounded. We point to Dingle, to Ventry, to Achill, where the work has been commenced, persevered in, and triumphantly succeeded, to the utmost extent that the means possessed could reach; let any one who demurs at what is said begin by pointing out the spots where, with similar determination and faith it has been begun, persevered in, and failed, unless, indeed, for lack of that "filthy lucre" of which thousands and tens of thousands are heaped on the shrine of Mammon, for one solitary piece that is devoted to the Lord.

When Jericho fell, we are told, "the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city." The work of faith was simultaneous and complete, so that each man saw the point that was opposite to himself fall down before *his* shout of trustful obedience. As yet, we only make a breach here and there, by means of isolated efforts, and the great wall stands, impervious in all other directions, so that nothing is done to enable the Lord's people to advance and take up their position on the enemy's ground, and deliver the poor captives there held in cruel bondage, appointed to die eternally: but this will take place whenever the Lord awakens so tender a concern for the souls of our perishing brethren, and inspires us with so enterprising a faith in his readiness to do more than we can ask or think, that second causes will be little accounted of, and the cold discouragements of doubting brethren will be but as a handful of water sprinkled on a glowing furnace to increase the fervor and brightness that it perhaps seeks to extinguish. While all Europe resounds with the bold Italian enterprise of subjugating England to the hateful sway of Rome, it were a noble act of faith to lay hold on Ireland and wrest it from her grasp. That it will be done, we do expect, and confidently believe; because God's dealings towards his people and the land have been such as to indicate that he has great purposes of mercy there. The only question is, who will, by faith, appropriate a rich share in the blessing of being found forward in His cause, and who, by unbelief, bring himself under that condemnatory

word, "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad."

The worthies enumerated by the Apostle Paul as having gloriously exemplified the power of faith, comprise as well Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephtha, as David, Samuel, and the prophets. Men who through faith subdued kingdoms, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. This is what we want. They, indeed, committed great slaughter, being commissioned of God to execute a purpose of vengeance no less than of deliverance; we, in the spirit of Him who came, not to destroy men's lives, but to save, would not inflict a wound or impose a punishment on any human being. We would fain subdue the kingdom, both spiritual and temporal, of the Pope among us; and to flight we would most joyfully turn the alien army, of Jezebel, falsely calling herself a prophetess, who seduces God's servants, teaching them to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols—the whole army of a foreign hierarchy and priesthood we would put to flight, unless, by turning to the Lord, they ceased to be aliens from the commonwealth of our Israel, and became heirs together of the grace of life. But what Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephtha, did with the sword of the warrior, that would we do with the Sword of the Spirit; and in so doing work a great national deliverance. The case of Gideon is so particularly and beautifully apposite, that no one whose heart is right with God, desiring to see the Lord glorified in lands where His mercy has been especially shown, from generation to generation, but must long for such a heart and such a work as was given to the son of Joash. The character of that champion of Israel is exceedingly fine: he presents to us an example, not of hasty credulity, but of calm, sober faith, that first required sufficient evidence of his mission being from the Lord, and then proceeded on it with an intrepidity never surpassed; and success commensurate with his courage.

No doubt there is an application common to all believers, and which we could not afford to dispense with, even in this history of Gideon, but are we therefore prohibited from applying collectively that which belongs to each? If so, no deliverance will be wrought on the earth on the

principle of faith in God; and while some men congratulate themselves on an approaching conversion of the whole earth by means of the preached Gospel, and a gradual taking of all the kingdoms of the world to be the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, they are allowing Satan to extend his dominion around their own homes, throughout their own native lands, and accepting the tens who may be gathered out of heathen nations, in lieu of the tens of thousands who perish in sin and wretchedness within a day's journey of their dwellings. We speak of those who are conscientiously persuaded that the period of millennial blessedness will be so brought in; and we cannot comprehend why such do not, like the men of Israel before Jericho, go straight up to the point that lies before them; why they do not make it their business, beginning at home, to form each a little nucleus, where many more may gather, and thus the work of conversion proceed; but at our present ratio of advance, there is not the faintest prospect of such a consummation, at least for ages to come; and surely our looking with the eye of faith at some distant triumph of Christianity will not excuse our neglect of present opportunity; for the salvation of those who live in our own day; or for the maintaining among us, as a people, the pure worship of God.

The writer would not have it understood that she participates in such view of the world's conversion: far from it. She believes that a remnant will be gathered to the Lord out of every nation, the gospel of the kingdom being preached among them for a testimony; but that so far from the period of the church's fullness and peace being ushered in by a general conversion, there shall hardly be found faith upon the earth. Yet to promote this faith, and to remove stumbling-blocks of doubt and disbelief, is her most earnest desire; that each in his own person may approach the Lord, as a loving Father, assured of his readiness to grant every good thing; and, having made his own calling and election sure, that he should use the high privilege of sonship to obtain such blessings for his country at large, as shall render her the refuge of the oppressed people of God, in the hour of persecution, instead of a stronghold of the enemy, who has

long held possession by means of the divisions subsisting among God's people; and until those divisions are healed will never be cast out.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE case of Israel in Gideon's days was most disheartening. Their oppressors, the Midianites, aided by the Amalekites, seized all their substance: neither sheep, ox, nor ass, nor the increase of the earth did they spare. They overran the country, and devoured it; and such was their strength, such the helpless weakness of its rightful possessors, that the man who should have proposed to deliver the land of Israel from its invading foes, would have appeared at least as insane as he who should go forth to deliver the millions of Ireland from Papal dominion. Yet it pleased the Lord, by one man's instrumentality, to reverse this painful picture, to turn to flight the armies of the aliens, and to deliver the kingdom. True, he wrought miraculously; but for our example it is recorded that he wrought effectually. With God, nothing is hard: all that He does is alike miraculous and alike easy. In such cases as this, He gave, as it were, a partial sight of the wonderful machinery which He employs, whereas in our times we only see the results, not the means that produce them; but are his angelic ministers less numerous now, or less active, because they are not clad in mortal shape to hold converse with us? or, walking as we must do by faith, not by sight, is not a marvel recorded in the Bible, and there made known to us, as much a marvel done on our behalf as though it were re-enacted for our personal satisfaction? Let us try how far the stirring story of Gideon may be made available for our present purpose.

Joash the Abi-ezrite had possessions in Ophrah, and there he had raised some wheat, which the Midianites would be sure to seize so soon as they discovered it. Gideon, his son, was thrashing out this wheat, not in the usual place, but by a wine-press, where he hoped to hide it from

the spoilers. An Angel, evidently, so disguised that Gideon took him for a man, seated himself under an oak, and saluted him, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." What proofs of valour Gideon had as yet afforded, we are not told: probably he had never signalized himself before men; but that thoughts were in his heart, full of patriotic zeal, and devout sorrow for the Lord's departure from Israel, is clear from his answer, which would now aptly express the misgivings of many a pious soul among ourselves. "If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us; and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites." Here, though too complainingly uttered, was what the Lord loves to hear from the lips of his people: an acknowledgment of former mercies, and an unhesitating reference to Him of all that had befallen the nation. An assurance, too, in the young Israelite's mind, that unless God had forsaken them no enemy could have prevailed. These words of Gideon's furnish a clew to all that followed: he pleads on behalf of his people; and addressing, as he thinks, a wayfaring stranger, he gives the glory alike of their past deliverances and of their present heavy chastisement, to Israel's God. The Lord looks upon him and answers him directly, "Go in *this* thy night, and thou shalt save Israel from the hands of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?"

Gideon objects his own insignificance and incompetency, and asks, "Wherewith shall I save Israel?" But the promise is repeated, and confirmed with a sign that discovers to him the celestial character of the being with whom he had been conversing. Now, it does unquestionably happen that the Lord often puts it into the hearts of individuals to attempt, in His cause, things as much beyond their own unassisted power, as was the deliverance of a nation beyond that of the son of Joash; and to a believing obedience to such suggestion do we trace many an amazing work, even in later times: but we habituate ourselves to regard as mere reveries of our own fancy these thoughts, and draw back from putting our good desires into

effect, with the objection, "Wherewith shall I accomplish this?" Truly, we can accomplish nothing; but the Lord can make us the means of whatsoever He wills to be done. A wonder, a miracle, such as Gideon saw, would satisfy us; but the inspired relation of what was vouchsafed to Gideon, though we possess it by a miraculous mercy—the preservation of these sacred writings through many long, and dark, and stormy ages, and their un mutilated transmission to us—will not overcome our unbelief: we must see for ourselves all the working of secondary causes, ere we can trust that according to our faith it shall be unto us.

Gideon commenced his work by building an altar unto the Lord, and calling it "Jehovah-shalom," "The Lord send peace." And such peace as he desired for Israel was sent, by his hand: the first movement being of uncompromising, public hostility against the darling, sin of his people. Their transgression was idolatry, and Baal had an altar in that property of Joash, the Abi-ezrite; even as another idolatrous object has in every district belonging to us. The same night on which Gideon had builded his altar and offered a peace-offering, a commandment came to him to break down Baal's shrine, and replace it with another, consecrated to the Lord. This is a very instructive passage: we are apt to suppose that in establishing to our utmost the worship of Christ, where Antichrist also is worshipped, we do all that is required of us. We err: God is not so to be honoured: the temple of idols is an offence that He will not brook; and that offence must be put away, ere He will deliver His people. We find Gideon prompt to obey: the act was a most daring one, for not only his father and his household, but all the men of the city would rise up against the destroyer of their false god. Knowing that they would interpose if he did it openly, he waited for the cover of night, then, with the same strong arm that thrashed the corn, he brake down Baal's altar, cut to the ground the consecrated grove that surrounded it, and with the wood for fuel, offered on the altar that he built in its place, a choice young bullock of his father's for sacrifice. A rare test of courage and obedience was this! Of course, a great commotion was raised so

soon as day revealed the extraordinary spectacle. Where a thick clump of trees had overshadowed the heathen shrine, polluted by the impious mysteries of a false rite, all was open to view; no tree remained, no shrine, but on the highest summit of a tall rock, and exactly in the ordered manner of Israel's worship, stood an altar to the Lord, smoking with the accepted sacrifice that He had selected. The enraged people collected round the house of Joash exclaiming, "Bring out thy son, that he may die," naturally expecting that the very proprietor of the abominable thing would be foremost to punish the man who had trespassed against Baal, and provoked the anger of the infernal spirits that dwelt in the idol. But here Gideon experienced the first proof of the Divine power exerted in his favour: Joash, evidently impressed with the senseless folly of that in which he also had offended, professed great indignation against any one who should suppose that Baal, being looked on as a god, required man's help to plead his cause. Instead of delivering up his son to death, he gave him the name Jerubbaal, saying, "Let Baal plead against him." Thus it has been, and thus it will be, that even among those to whose personal loss we advance true religion, and whose individual interests are involved in the support of what is false, we shall find help where we looked for opposition, and encouragement in place of vengeance. For, be it ever borne in mind, "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Gideon now blew a trumpet in the Lord's cause, and who were the first to gather around him? The men of Abi-ezer; the indignant avengers of Baal, who had just been clamouring for his life. These became messengers, ready to convey his summons to all Manasseh, to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, who came up to meet him; and the solitary thrasher of wheat saw himself at the head of more than thirty thousand men, prepared to do his bidding, and to follow him. Yet the noble Israelite trusted not in the arm of flesh: he believed that the Lord had commissioned him, and a full confirmation of that belief was all that he required. He asked a sign: it was immediately vouchsafed: he then, humbly deprecating the Lord's dis-

pleasure at his presumption, requested to have that sign reversed, and it was done. No longer did he hesitate; he rose up early, and pitched his camp not far from the Midianitish host. The next trial of his faith is very striking: the Lord told him the people with him were too many: if the Midianites were given into their hand, then might Israel vaunt themselves against the Lord, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. Accordingly, he made proclamation that whosoever was fearful and afraid might depart: and more than two-thirds of his company immediately left him. We must remember that the "Midianites and the Amalekites, and all the children of the East, lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels without number, as the sand by the sea-side for multitude." What a picture does it present to us of the might of Israel—a people saved by the Lord—that thirty-two thousand out of their impoverished heart-broken tribes should be "too many" to achieve the destruction of this enormous army! Gideon saw twenty-two thousand depart; and as he looked on the ten thousand who remained about him, and prepared to do valiantly, again came that startling voice, with its mysterious behest. "The Lord said unto Gideon, *The people are yet too many;*" and prepared another test, under which all but three hundred were rejected, and the word of the Lord assured their undaunted leader, "By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand; and let all the other people go every man unto his place."

Do we realize this? Can we picture to ourselves the thousands who were withdrawing, until Gideon stood with a mere handful of followers, contemplating the hundreds of thousands of armed warriors who were to flee before him, and leave his country free? And if we can realize it, what are our thoughts of God? It would seem as though the solemn declaration of the risen Jesus, "All power is delivered unto me in heaven and on earth," conveyed an idea of all power being withdrawn, so little do we take advantage of it. Verily, if an angel would come and converse with us, we should be nerved to attempt great things: but what are all

the words that all the angels of heaven could utter compared with that brief declaration of their King, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Rich treasury of promise, if we had but faith to put forth our hand and grasp the boon!

There was no delay with the Lord in giving Gideon the fruit of his faith. The same night the Lord bade him go down, for he had delivered into his hand the host of Midian. Then, with tender compassion for the infirmity of man, He graciously permitted Gideon first to take with him his servant, and go down privately to the host and hear what they should say to strengthen his hands for the exploit. Of this indulgence Gideon availed himself. It is a trait in his splendid character, that he never neglected any lawful means of confirming his faith; he always sought the assurance that what he did was according to the Lord's will. The remarkable dream which he overheard a man tell to his fellow, with the interpretation, abundantly satisfied him, and "he worshipped, and returned unto the host of Israel, and said, Arise!" The manner in which he ordered the battle is singular; there is nothing like it on record: it is a literal narrative, but highly figurative, too; and applicable to the work which God's people in every age are called to perform.

He divided his three hundred men into three companies, providing each man with an earthen pitcher, within which was concealed a bright lamp; and in every man's hand he placed a trumpet, directing them to observe him, and to do as he did. He then led them to the outside of the slumbering host, round which he stationed them, even as Israel had surrounded Jericho, and at the appointed moment he lifted the trumpet to his mouth, the blast of which was instantly echoed by his faithful adherents; so that the sudden alarm sounded at once from three hundred quarters in the ears of the terrified foe. At the same instant every pitcher was broken, every lamp shone forth; and a blaze so universal bursting on the darkness of the night, and accompanied by the voice of

the trumpet, struck a panic into the heart of Midian, that bereft the mighty adversaries of all self-command. The picture is exquisitely drawn: "And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran, and cried, and fled. And the three hundred blew the trumpets."

It appears that this party of Israelites, chosen and consecrated to the work of their country's deliverance, used no weapon. They continued sounding the trumpet and bearing aloft the lamp while, in the distracted camp, "the Lord set every man's soul against his fellow, even throughout the host." They fled, still slaying each other, to the borders of the land, and then Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh were permitted to pursue them. Gideon, at this juncture, sent messengers throughout Mount Ephraim, the inhabitants of which, by his direction, poured down towards Beth-bara and Jordan, to intercept the fugitives; he, with his three hundred, "faint, yet pursuing them." Perfect deliverance from these oppressive enemies was the result, and Israel again abode safely, serving the Lord with holy worship, while the land had rest.

This is one of the examples of practical faith to which the Gospel directs our attention, and "slow of heart" must he be who understands not the beautiful lesson conveyed, or believes not that it is written for his instruction, both as an individual and as a member of a community. That Gideon in his own person was true to the faith delivered to the saints, is evident from his ready reply to the angel; and the war that he waged was not for the deliverance of his soul from his spiritual foes, but of his country from the yoke of cruel and idolatrous oppression. It is quite allowable to regard the Midianitish host as typifying the invisible enemies who assail the believer's faith, and the evil dispositions that struggle for supremacy where God alone ought to reign: it is allowable also to consider it as the record of a mighty work of God, calling for the adoring praise of all who hear the story of his

glorious deeds: but much more is it adapted to the deep consideration of those who lament over the defection of their own country and people from the faith which they profess to follow, tracing to such departure from God the chastisements that fall upon them, and fervently desiring to become instrumental in hastening their return to the Lord; who will, in that case, in His abundant mercy, assuredly return to them.

The analogy between national and personal revolt is, indeed, much closer than we are accustomed to consider it. Picturing to ourselves the case of a brother, much beloved, but fallen under the power of sin,—we will say entangled in the net of Popery, and pursuing its anti-Christian practices—we shall not be long in ascertaining what would be, or at least what ought to be, our course. What Gideon did to deliver his country, we should do to deliver our brother. We should oppose to the whole host of his delusions, the enemies that were destroying his soul,—the brightness of the Gospel light, and the sound of the Gospel trumpet. We should admit no helpers in the work but such as we could confidently hope the Lord had chosen; and who would use no means but of his appointing. Not the wealthy, the influential, the strong, the worldly wise, who might trust in those carnal weapons, and in the spiritual conflict be easily overpowered by the god of this world; but the humble believer, who, knowing himself to be nothing, was yet confident in the Lord, and assured that he could do all things through Christ strengthening him. We should then seek in prayer, direction, zeal, patience, long-suffering, perseverance, and large supplies of heavenly wisdom; and so prepared, we should look for the same result that crowned Gideon's enterprise, even the rout of the foes that held our brother captive. Bearing in mind the gracious words,—“Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord,” and the encouragement,—“Resist the devil and he will flee from you: draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you,” we should labour, and eagerly watch for the first movement of the truant's steps in opposition to Satan, and in advance towards the Lord; not doubting but that a good work so begun,

would be continued, and carried on to his final salvation. There is nothing in this supposed case to startle any one: nothing contrary to what we know to be our duty and rejoice in as our privilege; and if under great opposition and long delay our zeal began to flag, or our courage to fail, a reference to Gideon and his long-repeated blast with the trumpet, and the ultimate extirpation of that against which he came, would do much towards reviving both.

And if for a brother, why not for hundreds of thousands of brethren? If one soul be so precious, why are not millions of souls equally valuable in our sight? If the dominion of Satan over a solitary member of our household be so grievous, why tolerate his triumphant rule throughout a kingdom? If faith in the heart of Gideon proved so invincible as to effect the deliverance of all Israel from a scourge justly inflicted, and their open reinstatement in the favour of God, as the blessing vouchsafed to his efforts proved that it did, why should we doubt that the like precious faith, matured as it is in us by beholding the substance of what he only saw in shadow, must prove effectual, if encouraged by the Lord's testimony to its mighty working, we bring it to bear on the same point, and attempt the national salvation of our people?

CHAPTER IX.

A FRIEND lately remarked to the writer, “I once made it a rule in reading the Old Testament, to apply every thing as though addressed to me alone; and frequently found it an embarrassing plan. I remember in studying Isaiah xliii., I managed pretty well to appropriate it, considering Jacob and Israel to mean myself, until I came to the fifth verse—‘I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West.’ This I could by no means individualize, nor did I know how to get over the difficulty without relinquishing what I had been taught to regard as the most profitable mode of realizing God's promises.” By thus losing sight of

the primary, literal bearing of the inspired word, many of us are led to contract our spiritual feelings within too narrow a compass, and to use the blessed treasury far less beneficially than we are authorized to do. Faith in God takes an immensely wide range, if it goes as far as the precept illustrated by example, and the example sanctioned by the precept will carry it. There is nothing absolutely and undeniably calculated to promote the glory of God at which faith ought to falter. No Christian doubts his obligation to contend against sin in himself, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly and righteously in this evil world. He knows that he must war against the flesh, and study to live after the Spirit; must preserve his mind and conscience undefiled, and strive to be a holy temple to the Lord. Faith teaches him, that though to this end he has to wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, still, as the cause is that of Christ and his gospel, he will have power given him to withstand, to stand, and to conquer: that, in fact, the victory is already won, by the Captain of his salvation, and that it is only for the trial of his constancy, and proof of his calling that he is girded to the battle; and by the same faith that tells him all this, he is also enabled to overcome whatsoever opposes him: because it shows him the Lord ever present, engaged for His own glory to bring His followers through every strait, and so tenderly, so perfectly united with them, that to the enemy who afflicts the humblest of His believing people the Lord can say, "Why persecutest thou me?" The preciousness of that help, the safety of that hiding place which is ever at hand, every poor servant of God well knows: he has tried the faithfulness and the patience too, of his Master; and surely no one among us will dare to say, that God's help in his time of need has ever been limited, save by the scanty measure of his own faith and hope—rarely indeed to that measure! daily, hourly, passing far beyond its utmost stretch.

And if so, why not remember that it is the prerogative of the Lord our God to turn the heart of a whole nation "as the

heart of one man?" He did so of old, frequently: He has done so in our day repeatedly. Not to dwell on the passage where these words occur (2 Sam. xix. 14), nor on that so beautifully encouraging (2 Chron. xxx. 12), where it is said, "And in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king, and of the princes, by the word of the Lord," let us look to the act by which a whole people, among the islands of the South, by one impulse, and in one day, flung the idols whom they and their fathers had worshipped for untold generations into the sea, and acknowledged the God of heaven, as declared unto them in the gospel, and submitted themselves to the righteousness of Christ. Or look a few years farther back, and behold one of the mightiest, most extensive kingdoms of Europe, with one fierce and terrible convulsion, tearing from their necks the strong yoke of Popery, and proclaiming themselves the servants of hell, by every excess of open, atheistical blasphemy, sacrilege, regicide, and indiscriminate massacre. See their long cherished shrines and imagery defiled with every mocking abomination, their idolized priests butchered in the public streets, the Sabbath abolished by law, and the Bible publicly dragged through the mire at the tail of an ass, and burnt as a solemn, national abjuration of God. Who did this? Satan, unquestionably, by the permission of God; and is the devil more potent to work ruin than the LORD is to banish evil, and to establish righteousness and peace? The question is revolting to a believer's mind; yet what but a practical denial of His supreme power united with the supreme goodness which we every day realize to ourselves, makes us doubt in the matter now pressed on the reader's attention? Has God any pleasure in the death of him that dieth? have we found his ear heavy or his arm shortened towards us? and to which of the ignorant, deluded beings, of any rank, station, or circumstances, that cross our daily path, shall we point and say, "This individual is out of God's reach—he cannot be won?"

Looking abroad upon the earth, numbering its population, summing up the amount of those who worship false gods, those who acknowledge Mahomet, and those

who are without even the name of a religion, together with the multitude of Israel still in unbelief, how small is the proportion of that remnant who professedly belong to Christ! Take those professing nations, and bring their established creeds to the test of God's word, we find the great bulk follow fables as decidedly opposed to the religion of the Bible as is the imposture of Mahomet; and others, including the enormous empire of Russia, sunk in such superstitions, wedded to such vain and profane inventions of man, that we can scarcely draw a distinct line between them and the former class. This investigation leaves us to look for the establishment of scriptural truth within the confines of the British empire, in Prussia, Holland, and Switzerland, in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and a few German principalities, with those sections in the United States of America where Protestantism is in the ascendant, and last, but oh, by how much the first in importance!—one bright glorious speck in the Holy City—Jerusalem itself. But again, see how, in Ireland, Popery vaunts of numbering seven to one throughout the land; how portentously it is spreading in England, how fostered and encouraged in her colonies to seduce and destroy God's heritage. Lastly, from the bulk of such as distinctly bear the Protestant name, sever those whom the Lord openly disclaims, the unbelieving heretics, the profligate, the servants of mammon, and lovers of the world, and see over how large a space in the globe that He has created, over how great a proportion of the immortal souls that He died to deliver, Christ is indeed King!

It is true that when He wills to take to him his great power and to reign, all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ; and in like manner when He puts forth his hand to rescue a soul from the dominion of Satan, that soul will be saved. But before any one settles it in his mind that nothing peculiar shall be done to extend the knowledge of the Lord through his native land, let him assure us that he considers it needless to make any especial effort for the conversion to Christ of such in his own household, and among his own immediate kindred, as deny the truth and follow Antichrist. If he can say this we excuse

him from joining in the work of assailing the strong-holds of Satan, just because he gives proof of having never been himself made free from the fetter. If he who provides not temporal things for them of his own house, be declared to have denied the faith, and to be worse than an infidel, can we hope better concerning him who supplies them not with spiritual things? But among the class to whom these pages are addressed, there are none, it is hoped, able or willing to put forth so disgraceful a plea of exemption from serving his country's best interests; and the only objection we expect to encounter is the exostulating, deprecatory question, "What can we do?"

You can do this: you can turn the whole matter over in your mind, and determine whether it is right, fitting, seemly, and for the glory of God, that a false and vile religion, branded by Him with the mark of anti-Christian idolatrous abomination, should reign and riot as it does around you; not only defiling but defacing the land, and menacing the destruction of all that appertains to the truth. You will, at least, be led to desire that, for the honour of Christ, and the salvation of men's souls, it were otherwise; and this desire encouraged, fed by the word of God, and fanned by continual prayer, will soon grow to a settled purpose of doing what you can for the removal of the blight. You will have before you the intercessory supplications of Daniel, of Moses, of Samuel; the decided movements of Joshua, of Gideon, of Nehemiah; and the glowing assurance that the Lord Jesus Christ presents your petitions to the Father, well pleased that you should volunteer to come to His help against the mighty; and ever mindful of His immutable word, "THEM THAT HONOUR ME, I WILL HONOUR." The prayer will ascend from your heart, unceasingly, "Lord, in the land where thou hast placed my lot, thy holy name is acknowledged, but thy truth blasphemed; thy glory is given to others, and thy praise to graven images. Thou hast sent upon these people strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, and they have no knowledge to deliver themselves; no heart to turn to Thee. I desire to see the enemy of souls driven from his usurped seat in this land, where once the Gospel flourished;

and I know that there is no restraint with Thee, to save by many or by few. Give me a part in this great work: provide me with some means to promote it; and give me a will so steadfastly devoted, that those means may be diligently used, to thy great glory and the salvation of my beloved country!" Even this would not be uttered in vain, by any humble individual, if uttered from the ground of the heart: and if from many hearts the same supplication was arising to Him whose ears are always open; arising not only within the bounds of our island, but wherever the enemy is traced, and Christ dishonoured, throughout an empire so peculiarly blessed of Him, God forbid we should DARE to doubt the readiness, the fulness of the blessing he would bestow!

What a glorious instance of triumphant faith, not only marching to victory, but celebrating the victory before it was won, the Holy Ghost has placed before us in the history of Jehoshaphat. When the children of Ammon and Moab, and Mount Seir (the mystical type of Rome, according to the Jewish commentators) came against Judah, this godly king at once sought the Lord, pleading before Him the promise given to Israel of old, and so richly confirmed to us by the Lord Jesus, that believing prayer should receive a gracious answer: reminding Him that they had not been permitted to invade these aliens, who, by Israel's sufferance dwelt in peace; and proceeding, "Behold, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee." To this beautiful, and, as regards our case, very appropriate appeal, a gracious answer was sent by the Lord's prophet, "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God's. Tomorrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Tiz: and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed: to-

morrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you."

On the morrow the people rose early in the morning and went forth: "and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Here me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem: believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." Then instead of a vanguard of spearmen and archers, the pious king "appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the LORD; for his mercy endureth for ever." The sequel is especially remarkable: "And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah, and they were smitten. For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another. And when Judah came towards the watchtower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and behold they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped."

There is a oneness in God's work, very observable. Joshua's rams' horns, Gideon's trumpets and lamps, Jehoshaphat's singers, were the weapons used against enemies who deemed themselves alike invulnerable and invincible. These were all weapons of faith and obedience: faith producing obedience, and faith that grasped in the fruit of that obedience to which it gave rise, the assurance that the work was the Lord's. He was willing to deliver His people; He only sought at their hands such open testimony of their hope and confidence in Him as should make it manifest to all that the blessings conferred were indeed the answer to prayer, the blessing on those who took Him for their shield. In the case to which we would apply all these spirit-stirring recitals, no man's life, no man's liberty, is aimed at: yea, to add eternal life, to make them wholly free, is the purpose towards all. Not the enemy but the enmity is to be slain. The foreign power veiling under affected spirituality its grasp on temporal

dominion, invading, oppressing, destroying the children of the land, is to be banished, thrust out, with all its snares, all its fetters, all its paraphernalia of usurped despotism, that Christ may reign alone, King over his church; and that the sovereign whom He sees fit to appoint, may be obeyed as his vicegerent. As matters now stand, neither are the things that are Cæsar's rendered unto Cæsar, nor the things that are God's unto God. Treason, alike to the earthly and the heavenly Monarch, is this sad fruit of the anti-Christian delusion which enwraps the great majority of nominally Christian kingdoms; and although conversion of the soul to God must be the work of the Holy Spirit alone, individually wrought in each separate case, still, as we have seen, the turning of a multitude from a false to a scriptural profession, from a state of contented darkness to an inquiry at least after light and truth, has been achieved even in our day by the zealous employment of means appointed of God for that end—the Gospel perseveringly declared, in public and in private, so that all might hear. When the Lord puts it into many hearts so to do, among His servants, He likewise prepares many among His enemies to receive it; for the people are always made willing in the day of His power; and that we so rarely see a mighty revolution perfected, is only because we so rarely see it attempted. Man is here peculiarly enslaved to the miserable thralldom of second causes; “Behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?” is the secret, if not the open response, when stimulated to aim at a mighty effort, and assured that He will prosper it. We are so accustomed to acquiesce in the dominion of Satan over the greater number of our fellow-creatures, that scarcely a pang of self-reproach is felt when the corpse of one who died in darkness is borne past our door, or meets us in the street. Christians rejoicing in their own privileges, and in the well-being of the small flock connected with them, have too little sympathy with Paul, too little of that feeling which prompted the great apostle's touching declaration: “I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart

for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” Would that such a godly sorrow overwhelmed us all! We should soon seek, and surely find, the means of removing it. A sentence of protracted anger and rejection had gone forth against Paul's nation which he could not reverse: yet to rescue the souls of all around him how ardently did he strive! No such sentence has been revealed to us with regard to our own race; the contrary is emphatically declared: “It shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there they shall be called the children of the living God.”

CHAPTER X.

On the subject before us one important note has to be made. We are nowhere authorized to take upon ourselves any enterprise concerning which we are doubtful whether the Lord sanctions it. The only anchor on which faith can lean is some clear promise revealed in the Bible. We do not mean so to limit the Divine power, or so to dive into the purposes of the Most High, as to assert that individuals may not be incited by His Spirit to engage in certain undertakings peculiar to the day and its remarkable features; but we do say, that unless they can find something confirmatory of such attempt being consonant to the revealed will of God, they have no safe warrant of being commissioned by Him. Miracles there may be; and will be: but unless they exactly harmonize with the perfect revelation made in the Holy Scriptures, we must denounce them as the false signs and lying wonders of the adversary. To say, “Such a thing would be a great exploit; I feel impelled to set it on foot, and I have no doubt of its being accomplished by the power of God assisting my weak efforts,” would be mere presumptuous self-will, unless under the sanction we have named. Human fancy is a very active thing; and a Christian may be misled by phantoms as visionary as those of a worldling, though the field into which they invite him be consecrated ground. He may be sensible of

an impulsive movement within, and verily believe it to be of God, while in reality it is but a natural result of the full concentration of his mind on a particular point; or perchance a suggestion of the subtle enemy to lead him into doubtful, if not into forbidden paths, to the great injury of the cause that he desires to promote. Hence the wisdom of Gideon, who had conversed with an angel, and seen a supernatural work performed in proof of his celestial nature and mission. Gideon asked another miracle to confirm the first, but he asked it in secret prayer to the Lord himself, and in the attitude of heartfelt prayer the believer is always safe. He required that a dry fleece which he laid on the ground should be soaked in dew during the night, while all the earth remained free from moisture. It was done according to his wish; but he seems to have considered that the fleece might by some other means have been moistened; and therefore he again betook himself to prayer, asking to have dew upon all the ground, while the fleece should remain perfectly dry. This has been pointed out as an infirmity of faith: we consider it as a mark of holy wisdom. Had he undertaken to lead Israel against their oppressors, uncommissioned of the Lord, the attempt, baffled by superior numbers and overwhelming force, would have brought down tenfold vengeance on his poor country; giving the invaders a pretext for some terrible measures, alike for punishment and prevention. He might regard his personal risk as nothing, and be willing to hazard it on the proofs he had received under the oak at Ophrah; but he had no right to implicate all Israel in the consequences of following a possible delusion.

But here it may be asked, Can we, to whom no celestial messengers are sent, no particular revelations made, assure ourselves that the Lord is with us in any important work, where success would be as wonderful as failure must prove detrimental? Three points must be established to satisfy a conscientious inquirer in such a case: first, that the object in view is one certainly tending to the glory of God: next, that it is one which his servants are encouraged to achieve, and lastly,

that he is pledged to aid and to prosper them in it.

The question mooted is this: Shall we, who know the Lord, and serve Him in the Gospel of His Son, bring our efforts to bear, with all the powers granted to us, on the one point of ridding our country from the curse of a system that while calling itself Christian is essentially anti-Christian, idolatrous, and ruinous to all who embrace it? The means proposed are those of general supplication, seconded by an honest attempt on the part of every individual to do something towards the work; either personally, or by some delegated agent, distinctly proclaiming the real character of Popery, and setting before the people the truth as it is in Jesus: and this with a settled purpose of banishing from the land what has so long been its most cruel bane—a point at which none can reasonably aim unless believing that God himself will work both in us and with us, to the achievement of a glorious deliverance from an evil to which the next change in political affairs may, and probably will, give power to place its foot on our necks, and to subjugate what remains of Protestantism, or in other language, of Christianity, in this country. We ask, then, Does this object certainly tend to the glory of God?

The Bible answers, that such national effects have followed upon events clearly ordered to produce them. We should be fully justified in availing ourselves of Jewish history, as in the foregoing illustrations we have done; but our object not being to spiritualize actual events, we will not adapt to a Gentile people what had reference only to Israel: we will confine ourselves to what is common to all. When the stupendous miracle was wrought by which the three Israelites were delivered from the burning fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, that mighty despot, who had at the very time assembled his vast empire on the plains of Dura to worship a gigantic idol, issued the following royal command: "I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut to pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill." After this, a wonderful vision

was vouchsafed to the king; and what was there foreshown came to pass. On the termination of his extraordinary punishment, he addressed a very beautiful proclamation unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth, saying, "I thought it good to show the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation." He concludes this, the most exquisite of royal edicts, in these words: "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." In like manner, when the prophet Daniel had been miraculously preserved in the den of lions, and was taken out unhurt, Darius thus wrote with the same extensive greeting, "to all people, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth, . . . I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions." It cannot for a moment be supposed that such writings of Gentile monarchs would be recorded by the Holy Ghost unless it were from the first the Lord's good pleasure to be so magnified throughout their immense dominions, and to exhibit to us a model that even Christians too often fall short of. And if for instances like this of delivering care over the bodies of His servants, how much more are all nations called to acknowledge and to glorify His redeeming mercy in the gift of His dear Son! Paul dwells much on this: Jesus Christ, he says, "was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God, for His mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, "Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people." And again,

"Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him all ye people. And again Elias saith, "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust." Not to speak of heathen lands, surely it is God's will that where Christ is known and confessed, there Christ should reign: but who will dare to assert that the King of kings may be said to reign where the throne is usurped by one whom the Holy Ghost has entitled "The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth;" that the Lord Jesus reigns with such a one, drunk with the blood of His saints and martyrs! No, he does not reign even nominally where Popery prevails: the virgin of Israel, who bore His human nature, is exalted far above Him; His glory is given to others, and His praise to graven images.

But again, there are words proceeding from the mouth of the Lord, that convey with great power the same impression of what He regards as glorifying Him. To the angel of the Church of Ephesus, He bids the apostle write, "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate." To the angel of the Church of Pergamos, after commending their fidelity, "I have a few things against thee, because THOU HAST THERE them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idola, and to commit fornication. SO HAST THOU ALSO them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." To Thyatira, after mentioning their works, charity, service, faith, patience, and abounding works again, "Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because THOU SUFFEREST that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idola." Many as are the passages that might be adduced from the Psalms and

other portions of Scripture in support of this truth—that God is glorified by the expulsion of error and establishment of truth among a people, the overwhelming force of the preceding messages renders it needless to recapitulate them. Here, we have the Lord Jesus, robed in the glory and majesty of heaven, distinctly rebuking and menacing with the loss of their own privileges some whom He acknowledges as His faithful, zealous servants, because they suffer idolatrous teachers to tamper with the souls of His poor people: while others are especially commended because they could not bear, would not tolerate among them, such as made a false claim to apostleship. Now, the most prominent, distinguishing marks of Popery are those three, idolatry, fornication, and false apostleship. Their head, the man of sin, proclaims himself the direct successor of the Apostle Peter; and every priest in their communion glories in a pretended apostolical successorship and authority. The matter is so plain—the applicability of our Lord's language so startling, that the man who is not convinced by it that the glory of God actually requires him, whether minister or layman, so far as in him lies, to drive away the erroneous, and strange, and anti-Christian doctrines thus denounced, will never yield to any testimony that the Bible can supply. We therefore pass on to the second point, which has, indeed, been pretty well settled by the foregoing extracts; but which may be further established.

Is this purification of a nominally Christian community from what dishonours God, a task that He has commanded His people to perform?

Still declining to avail ourselves of the unequivocal answer supplied by the whole history of Israel, because they were under a dispensation to execute judgment on individuals, which we are not, a full solution of this point may be found in the New Testament, where the extreme solicitude of the apostles to keep pure and undefiled the profession of the truth, by either reclaiming or expelling all who evidently held it in unrighteousness, is a model for the church in all ages. The presence of anti-Christian deception, under the name of Christianity, is pointed out as existing in their day, and predicted as certain to

assume a more dreadful aspect, and to produce more extensive effects in a latter period of time, and we must remember that the enormous growth of this evil, so far from affording a plea for its toleration is a louder call for its removal. When a Christian fairly puts the question to himself, "Am I, or am I not, under an obligation to labour diligently for the expulsion of Popery from my native land?" he will find that in neglecting so to do, he slights some of the plainest commands of Scripture. For, be it remembered, the evil that we would remove consists in the seduction and perversion of Christ's servants—persons wearing His livery and bearing His name—to commit spiritual adultery, and to bring dishonour on that holy name whereby they are called. Heathens, infidels of every stamp, and all opposers of Christ, can point to the prevailing practices, and say, "Lo, these senseless, idolatrous observances constitute the worship of the Christian! They believe yonder feeble man has power to forgive their sins; or to fasten on them the seal of eternal condemnation if they fail to compound for every offence by the purchase of his worthless pardons. They believe that the piece of dough which their own hands kneaded and baked, formed their bodies out of the dust of the earth and died on the cross to redeem their souls. They bow before those wooden images to propitiate the favour of certain dead people whom they are supposed to represent; burning incense, and lighting candles, and sprinkling water after the exact pattern of those pagan rites, rather than defile themselves with which, the early professors of Christianity died by torture; and to complete the system, they consider it lawful and right to persecute unto death all who refuse to adopt the same system of lying wickedness." Now, if these were indeed the doctrines and practices of the Christian faith, would any rational pagan exchange his own plain idolatry for such a complicated tissue of contradictory monstrosities? Would any rational Jew hesitate to spurn it from him with loathing contempt? Yet the people who know the Lord, who have learned both to fear His great and terrible name, and to appreciate His unspeakable love in the redemption of the world by the death of His dear Son, can

endure that so hideous a burlesque, so atrocious a libel on the Eternal, should be exhibited, and received, and followed, even throughout the land where, as yet, the laws are unrepealed that forbid the public parade of Popish observances, and the assumption of ecclesiastical titles by Popish teachers. Were it as in former days, when Popery for a time forcibly seized the reins of government, and obedience to the dictates of Christian faithfulness might wear the aspect of insubordination to constituted authorities, then indeed a scruple might be raised in some minds; for any attempt to propagate the religion of Christ would be penal, since Popery never tolerates. Happily, however, such is not our case: concessions have been made which we have no power to rescind, and the guilt of such unscriptural concessions must rest on those who granted them. Our part is to apply the remedy that lies in our own hands, even the Gospel, individually to reach the hearts of men, and to throw down by the blast of God's own trump the walls that with unallowed hands our rulers assisted to strengthen. Is it a duty? Let us rather ask, How has the Lord so long borne with our sinful quietude under the wrongs perpetually heaped on him and on our brethren? "Go ye, and teach all nations," said our risen Saviour to His disciples, "beginning at Jerusalem." Now, Jerusalem was an example specially appropriate to the present case; for, first, it was the central point of their native land; secondly, it was the very head-quarters of all erroneous belief, the chief seat of those who taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and made void the law of God by their traditions; and, lastly, it was the spot where, by Roman power, our Lord was crucified, and the worst devices of Satan carried into effect. Yet at Jerusalem, the last place probably in the known world which those Jews would have selected then to proclaim it in, was the pure faith to be openly preached to the very persons who had just seen its divine Founder expire on the ignominious cross. When we find the apostles commanded to do this, can we possibly question where our path of duty lies? When we see the hearts of three thousand in one day bowed in conviction, in repen-

tance, and in faith to the name of the crucified Nazarene, and that too at the word of the fickle follower who had so recently forsaken and denied Him, dare any Christian plead his own unfitness for the work, or doubt the all-sufficiency of God to prosper it, even beyond aught that he can ask or think? The apostles not only were careful to do what their Master had commanded, they constantly urge it on others; "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." "Of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire: hating even the garment spotted with the flesh"—that garment of false and carnal profession, in which Rome wraps her miserable victims; that fire of endless torment, into which her soul-destroying abominations lead them. The divine precepts of Solomon, applicable to all times and all nations, also testify, "When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth; and when the wicked perish, there is shouting. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked." No point can be more unmistakably clear than that the Lord requires of every one who receives the Gospel diligence in communicating it to others, and zeal in guarding it from all admixture of what might dishonour God. It was the blight of Jerusalem in the prophet's days, when idolatry had prevailed to contaminate the public mind, that her silver was become dross; her wine mixed with water. Even so it was in Galatia, in the Gentile Church, where teachers had crept in on a basis somewhat similar to that of Popery, only by no means so corrupt and wicked. The apostle addresses them, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel: which is not another (i. e., not a Gospel,) but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than

that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Another Gospel, which is indeed no Gospel, but in direct opposition to the true, is taught in a professedly Christian community; they who receive it are thereby removed from God: consequently, while they are ruined He is robbed and dishonoured by it; and it is incumbent on every one who believes on His name, and would show forth His praise, to do His utmost towards recovering out of the snare of the devil all who have been taken captive by him at his will. The greater the multitude so led astray, the more pressing is the imperative call for earnest efforts to rescue the victims and to stay the plague.

That God will indeed be with His people in such an undertaking, He has not left us at liberty to doubt. The very attempt, the hearty desire and purpose to do any thing for the promotion of His honour, is always accepted graciously, even when the work is not permitted. David, settled in his kingdom peaceably, proposed to build a house for the service of the Lord. He said, as he sat in his royal palace, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies, "See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." A beautiful and devout thought, and it was immediately replied to by the Lord, who on that same night sent him a message, declaring that not he but his son should carry into effect his purpose: and we are told by Solomon in reference to it "The Lord said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart." No man can certainly know what he will be permitted to achieve; but in whatsoever he attempts for the glory of God, he is approved. Knowing that all our sufficiency is of Him, we never need fear aiming at great things; for if He wills to use us in accomplishing them, our weakness is no bar; and if not, the failure is never attributable to any weakness on our part, unless it be the weakness of faith: for, "Believest thou that I am able to do this?" is the query put to our hearts by the Great Searcher; and in them He reads the reply. That the Lord will work, yea, chooses to work with the most incompetent instruments, He has declared, in a

passage that is beautifully illustrated by the story of the humble Abi-ezrite and his diminished little band: "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence." This is spoken of the preaching of the Gospel, for the banishment of all error, whether the result of Jewish perversion or of Greek incredulity: therefore, if any reader of these pages feel himself to be, in the proud world's estimation, foolish and weak, base, despised, and overlooked, let him be up and doing; for to such will the work be committed, that the excellency of the power which effects it may be known to be of God.

CHAPTER XI.

FAITH in God is a principle of holiness. It admits no other standard of morals than that which is fixed, and by His inspiration recorded, in the word of truth. With the Bible before us, none need err in morals for lack of being distinctly told what is virtue, and what is vice; nor can he who simply seeks so to walk as to please God fail of arriving at the knowledge of what he ought to do. Look at those beautiful chapters that Hannah More loved to call the code of Christian ethics, the twelfth of the Epistle to the Romans, and fifth of the first to the Thessalonians: see also the discourse that our Lord delivered on the Mount, and the commentaries supplied throughout the Holy Book on those two tables which contain the summary of the moral law—surely the path of God's commandments is so plain that the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein: and to those who humbly walk with God it is a small matter to be judged of man's judgment, knowing that He who judgeth is the Lord. Faithful, therefore, is the Psalmist's saying, "Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

But now in painful contrast to this, pause for a moment on another picture. Bellarmine was a cardinal in the Romish Church, and is considered one of the standard lights of that community, a safe, sure guide in matters of faith. In one of his works, now in process of reprinting at Rome under the sanction of the present Pope, the following passage occurs. He had been quoting from a bull, called *Unam Sanctum*, of abiding force among Papists, these words: "Moreover, we declare, affirm, define, and pronounce that it is altogether a matter of necessity for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pontiff:" and in treating on the unlimited sovereignty of that Man of Sin, the cardinal says, The Catholic faith teaches that every virtue is good, and every vice is evil. But if the Pope should fall into error by commanding vices or prohibiting virtues, then the church would be bound to believe that vices were good, and virtues evil, unless she wished to sin against conscience: for the church is bound in doubtful things to acquiesce in the judgment of the Pope; and to do what he commands, and not to do what he prohibits; and lest by chance she should sin against conscience, she is bound to believe good what he commands, and bad what he prohibits."

Such is the devilish doctrine substituted for the pure and perfect standard of good and evil provided for us by the Lord, and by which also, whether we adopt it or not, every human being must be judged at the last day. It is to the will, the judgment of a single individual, himself, walking in gross darkness, the earthly head of a stupendous system of idolatry, deception, and debauchery, that the conscience of every Romanist is thus so indissolubly bound as to make any deviation from his will a sin against that conscience. If he commands vices, they are to be practised, and devoutly believed to be virtues in God's sight, thus making the Eternal appear a confederate with the villainy of a wicked man: if he forbids the practice of duties that God has commanded, they are to be left undone on the same principle. If this be not to "speak great words against the Most High," we know not what can realize that description: and if it be not a total subversion of the whole principle of "faith

in God," nothing can be so. To give up a nation to such terrible delusion as this—a nation possessing a Protestant Government, Protestant Churches, and free course for the Bible in its every nook, is an offence so great, that again we repeat, let every individual, as he loves the Lord, and would not be found abetting the cause of Satan against Him, be up and doing, to roll away this foul reproach.

There are many encouragements that will grow upon our sight, becoming more distinct and cheering as we steadily consider them. In a standard Review, admirably conducted, and always in a most calm, dispassionate, well-considered style, the following passage lately occurred at the end of a notice of a volume of sermons relating to the Jews. We know not the writer, but we give it, because it bears very strongly on our present argument.

"We cannot bring this article to a conclusion without adverting to another important topic connected with the restoration of Israel, viz., the declaration of God's wrath against those nations which, whilst employed by Him as instruments to punish his people for their sins have added wanton insults and malice to their calamities, and thus "helped forward the affliction." Isa. xlvi. 6—11, and Zech. i. 15—24, are remarkable proofs of God's jealousy in their behalf, even whilst chastising them; and history testifies that a severe retribution has sooner or later overtaken those who have exulted over or trampled upon them: all which are but as occasional warnings, to admonish mankind from time to time of the certainty of that greater day of vengeance, which is denounced against the enemies of His people; insomuch that it is difficult to meet with a passage in the prophets, declaring the future glory and consolation of Israel, which is not coupled with some intimation of wrath against their enemies. The momentous question, however, arises, Which are the nations likely to suffer in this respect? To which we reply by another question, Where is the nation that has not wantonly imbrued its hands in the blood of Israel, and defrauded, oppressed, or persecuted them? Certainly England cannot plead *not guilty* in this respect, as the massacres of London, Lincoln, and York, and the various acts of spoliation

perpetrated by our early Norman kings, witness against us."

No, England cannot so plead, nor can any European nation that we know of, save one, do it: and what is that one? Green Ireland can hold up the hand crimsoned, alas! by many a sanguine spot, but free, wholly free, from the blood of Israel. She can stand forth, and with beaming joy in her aspect, look up to poor Israel's God, and say, NOT GUILTY. It is a most solemn point, and one that no candid reader of God's word can venture to treat lightly. We resume the quotation from the Review, which makes no mention of this exception, little thought of among men, but recorded in the Lord's book of remembrance; and after showing at how great a distance of time from the commission of sin the judgment provoked by that sin has often overtaken a people, thus proceeds:

"It behooves England, therefore, as well as other Gentile nations, to walk softly in this matter. Awful fruits of apostasy and ungodliness are daily developing themselves among us, which look as if the Lord were already about to give up the mass of the nation to hardness; while the signs of the times portend that clouds are gathering, which may soon fall with terrific fury on the world. As individuals, we may still propitiate the Lord; and there is no surer mode of securing for ourselves impunity in the dark and cloudy day, than in showing mercy and favour unto Israel. Though Jericho was not spared, yet because Rahab did good unto Israel, she was remembered, and obtained loving mercy, and kindness, even in the midst of the wrath; and whilst the battlements of the city were laid low, and the fury of the Lord of hosts was being poured out upon her countrymen and neighbours, she was delivered in the hour of danger, and remembered among the Lord's triumphant people."^{*}

The very circumstance of the writer of the foregoing being either unacquainted with, or forgetful of, the acknowledged exemption of Ireland from what, as he justly remarks, is the almost universal sin of the Gentile nations of Europe, adds force to its applicability here. The people of Israel were, by the Lord's overruling

* *Churchman's Monthly Review*, October, 1842.

mercy, withheld from settling in Ireland during the actual domination of Popery, which would doubtless have revelled in their blood, as elsewhere it did; and Irish Protestantism has, in comparison with the means at its disposal, done more for the spiritual welfare of the Lord's ancient people than any other country. It was truly remarked, during the season of greatest depression, and overwhelming distress, some fifteen years ago, that the testimony of Paul to the beneficence of the Macedonian Churches was especially applicable to that of Ireland, in the amount of her voluntary contributions to the Jewish cause: "How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift." If this were indeed, as we most strongly assert it was, a token of the Lord's grace vouchsafed to Ireland, inasmuch as what she did, and still does for Israel, came not as a compensation for past injuries inflicted but as a free-will offering, a thank-offering, for the mercy obtained through the ministration of Israelites of old, and a tribute of love to Christ, shown to the people in whom we know his latter-day glory will be especially manifested—then, some marks of the divine acceptance of this love, some token that God remembers Ireland for good while beginning to remember Israel according to His promise, will surely appear. Let us inquire whether such token has not already appeared.

A year since, as we all know, a wonderful work was effected. It was put into the heart of the King of Prussia to plan, and into the hearts of the British Government to execute, a most bold undertaking: nothing less than publicly to establish a pure Scriptural church in that holy city, so long trodden down by Gentiles of every persuasion except the true faith: Popery, Mohammedanism, and the corrupt, yea, idolatrous system of the Greek Church, all met on that desecrated ground. The Jew and the Protestant were alone excluded, or barely tolerated, while privately pursuing each his own form of worship: but now it was decided to plant openly

the standard of the true faith; and under the sanction of the Moslem, who yet holds Judea beneath his sway, to form a rallying point for all the Protestant Churches, with an especial view to the ingathering of Israel. All was arranged; England was to furnish the chief pastor for this revived church of the Apostle James; and among all the learned, pious, and zealous divines, congregated in the great metropolis of the empire, and scattered over its extent, on whom did Prussia and England fix?

On an Irishman.

And what did that Irishman do?

He, by God's grace performed an act that angels might have rejoiced to do. He took off the reproach from Israel. He refused the high and tempting honour, and pointing to the prophetic word, convinced that the set time to favour Israel was at length come, he prevailed to place a Jew on that glorious holy mountain, a watchman of Israel on the walls of Zion, a standard-bearer to lift up an ensign to the people, and in so doing, actually commenced the restoration of Israel to their own land.

Yet further—that son of Abraham so suddenly elevated to the episcopal superintendence of God's own Church in Jerusalem, with a commission to oversee the vast district of Syria, Chaldea, Egypt, and Abyssinia, was one who received his ministerial orders from the National Church of Ireland; and who bears in his title the name of Ireland combined with that of England, attached to the blessed word Jerusalem. Ireland, not even recognized as a separate kingdom, having in herself no political existence, here stands forth indissolubly connected with the most eventful transaction of this or of any preceding age since the Christian era. Never can the writer forget the emotions of her soul when she saw that noble Irishman, in the stately metropolitan Palace of England, mount the pulpit to pour forth a flood of eloquence on that glorious text, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth"—while before him sat the meek, yet most zealous Israelite, whom he had chosen

and appointed to the work, even at the sacrifice of such stupendous honour to himself, and who waited to receive his high commission at the hands of the chief pastor of the English Church. It was a moment of unutterable, inconceivable joy to a heart where Israel and Ireland had so long been enshrined together; which had oft mourned over their respective desolations, and could then, by faith, address them both in that burst of gratulation, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come; and the glory of the Lord hath risen upon thee."

To regard but lightly this great sign of the times in reference to the children of Jacob, savours of presumption; surely when God caused all Scripture to be written for our learning, he conveyed not his meaning in terms so ambiguous that they would express almost any other thing, rather than that which their plain grammatical sense implies. Happy is the faith that lays hold on every indication of the Lord's loving-kindness, tender mercy, and gracious purposes towards our own land, and our own people! Guilty as England was in former ages of cruelty towards the Jews, we are encouraged to hope that her part in this great work is to her sign of pardon and peace; and that what she as a vassal of Rome was prompted by Rome to do, will not be laid to the charge of her Protestant children. They who "come out" of Great Babylon, ceasing to be partakers of her sins, will not receive of her plagues; and if England withstands the terrible sweep of Popery, now beginning and more than beginning its deadly course over her fair soil, if she withstands in this evil day, doubtless she will be able yet to stand in the Lord's strength, to the end. This is now a defensive position: assailed on all sides from without, and traitorously dismantled within, even by hands most solemnly pledged for the preservation of her best bulwarks, she is become a besieged city. Far otherwise is it with Ireland, long groaning under a yoke of foreign usurpation, nominally spiritual, but in reality as secular as the despotism of the Turk, and lacking only faith to arise and send the detested fetter from her soul.

It was lately remarked in public, by one who has done more, perhaps, than any

man ever did since that revival of extinct religion in the land justly called the reformation, to lay bare the fearful principles, and to expose the deep workings of Popery among us, that "he was tired of producing evidence of facts that ought to convince the judgment, that ought to call forth the principle, that ought to awaken the energy of every man who had judgment, principle, or energy in the land: tired of hearing resolutions affirmatory of the truth of those statements, and then, when the excitement of the moment had passed away, seeing all subside like some dark and stagnant lake over which a breeze had passed to ruffle the surface of it for a moment." The same complaint may be echoed by all who, from the pulpit, the platform, or the press, issue appeals to the slumbering spirit of Christian enterprise, connected with the rule of Popery over our fellow-countrymen, as established in Ireland, and rapidly hastening to a coextensive establishment in England. Of such it may truly be said, that to the great majority of those who hang upon their words, they are as a lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for they hear the words, but do them not. How many, we must ask, among those who have sworn the oath, "that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state or potentate hath, or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, sovereignty, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm"—how many of those who, not having had occasion to swear it, yet do from their heart's core assent to the abjuration therein contained, can say that they have made any distinct, vigorous effort to banish that usurped authority where it is known to be exercised, or to keep it aloof where it is known to be struggling for admission, "within this realm?"

Our words may not be as goods in the sides of our readers: we lack wisdom, and are defective in persuasive powers; yet we challenge contradiction of what is here asserted, that it is in God's sight the bounden duty of every one who knows Him to be strong, and to do exploits for the furtherance of His cause and the discomfiture of his enemies, at this crisis: and if the principle be admitted, but its practicability denied, we ask, When did the

Lord require at any man's hand a personal service that he was incapable of rendering, unless indeed in those cases where saving faith in the perfect obedience of Christ is accepted in lieu of that which man cannot perform? But to this class the subject before us does not belong: no scriptural Christian ever dreams of putting faith in the place of his relative duties, as a father, or a husband, a son, a subject, or a citizen; and this does really form a most important branch of imperative duty in every one of those characters, extending its obligations to the female, so far as her sphere reaches, and enforcing the demand on every human being who knows Christ as a Saviour and a King. No one stands exempted from this service: none who has access to the throne of grace can be excused from making it a matter of urgent supplication, and what we are bound to pray for, we are bound to expect; and where the work is one that will, in the ordinary course of providence be accomplished by means, what we ask and expect we are bound to labour for, as workers together with God, in a matter very closely interwoven with the honour of His Holy Name.

Now, does any one in his heart question the fact, that if it pleased the Lord to cleanse the land from the abominable pollutions of idolatry, He could do it? Does any one, not being an infidel, who suffers under a painful disease, doubt that God, if such were His good pleasure, could remove it? In the latter case, which of us will say to the physician who approaches with a suitable remedy, "I will not use the means you suggest, because it is in the Lord's power to restore me;" and will not rather say, "I accept your remedy in humble reliance on the blessing of God to make it effectual to my recovery?" In the former case, we should charge the person with fanatical presumption, in supposing that the course of nature was to be changed for his especial benefit; and why a national disease should be viewed in a light wholly different from a bodily ailment, we do not know; certainly Scripture fully warrants the contrary plan. "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers. . . . Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the

foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Your country is desolate," &c. Here we have an instance out of many, of the parallel drawn between the spiritual maladies of a community and the bodily disease of an individual, while closing, binding up, and mollifying with ointments are used to figure the adequate remedies. Again, "For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt: I am black: astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" This was spoken of Israel when spiritual sins, more particularly the heinous offence of worshipping strange gods, and burning incense unto the queen of heaven, were about to draw down terrible calamities from the hand of the Lord. His prophets showed the people their transgressions, and warned them of the coming sword, but in vain: there were not found among them faithful men, like Gideon and their other ancient worthies, to work deliverance. Those men were raised up of God for the purpose; and wheresoever we find a few believing zealous people, we are justified in concluding that the Lord has a work for them to do in the place where He has planted them; and if they are surrounded by a multitude acknowledging Him, yet through ignorance and the craft of false teachers walking contrary to His commandments, and making the Christian name a scorn to the very heathen, there can scarcely be a second opinion as to what is their appointed work. As an obvious rule we should admit this, were it not that we grow up from infancy in the contemplation of permitted evil, and regard that as a matter of course which in the sight of the Lord is a monstrous and a horrible thing.

Let us imagine the case of a small but well-ordered Church of the Lord, comprising the entire population of some island, where nothing had been heard from the lips of their teachers but pure Gospel truth; and where, howsoever the desperate wickedness of man's heart might lead to practical inconsistencies, still they were known and denounced as such, and the

standard of faith and morals remained unimpeached: where alike the magistrate bore the sword, and the preacher occupied the pulpit, for the maintenance of true religion. Suppose that into such a place false teachers of profane heresy and detestable idolatries intruded from another land, and commenced seducing the more weak-minded and ignorant of this flock. What would be the duty, what the impulse of the community? Would they suffer these "grievous wolves" to enter unresisted; or, if they had effected an entrance, to remain unopposed, destroying the sheep of the Lord's pasture? Would they not rather use every means to rescue such as had been ensnared, and to strengthen all others against the delusions of Satan? Could they acquiesce in the falling away of one neighbour's family after another, until a vast majority of their whole number had forsaken the Lord, and were dropping before their eyes into a dark eternity? It is not to be conceived: we should say of such persons that their own faith was little better than a delusion, seeing they lack its brightest evidence—love for the brethren. These poor deluded souls are our brethren in God's sight, as is manifest from the words of the Apostle already quoted—"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he . . . shall save a soul from death." By which it appears that all who are baptized into the name of Christ, and profess to follow him, have so far a tie of brotherhood with us as to demand our first care, our first charity. All men are our neighbours, and to be loved even as ourselves; but since we cannot serve all equally, the priority of claim certainly rests with those who, acknowledging the same God, and receiving as His record the same divine law, are yet seduced into paths that lead to death. The household of faith, the truly regenerate, Christ's own flock, who are kept by the power of faith unto salvation, these are not merely brethren; they are members one of another, and form but one body of which He is the head. God forbid we should ever seem to hold the unscriptural tenet, that the outward baptism of which all partake, in itself effects any other change in the sinner's condition than to graft him into the visible church so far

as external means will go. We know that every graft does not strike: that man may do his best, and leave the bud to all appearance well fixed in the stock, but a little time proves the abortion, when, for lack of real incorporation, and the nutriment of the living sap, the strange slip withers and falls off; or perhaps remains swathed to the tree, a perished thing, deforming and disgracing its beautiful outline. Still, having been so bound on, the true branches have a right to sympathize with it: they mourn its state, and gladly, most gladly would promote its vivifying participation in the life of the tree; knowing that while they flourish and bear fruit, the end of their wretched companion is to be cast off and burned. It is needful in these times for each to speak plainly his dissent from the dogma of baptismal regeneration.

To return to our imaginary isle of saints—alas, that it should be a merely Utopian isle!—we may conceive the earnestness with which the spread of corruption would be withstood, and how cordially all would combine to resist the subversion of Christ's kingdom among them. In fact, we could not reconcile a contrary line of procedure with the character given of the people. It remains, then, to reconcile with our own profession of the same godliness, our tacit consent that the Lord should be blasphemed, and the souls of our brethren destroyed in every quarter to which we can turn our eyes, among tens of thousand who are nominally baptized into Christian faith. We say nominally, because the salt and the spittle, the oil and the exorcism of Popery bear little analogy to the washing spoken of in Scripture; nevertheless, while we admit it to be a species of baptism, and Popery a species of Christianity, we are bound to act accordingly: that is to say, to make the conversion of a Romanist as paramount an object when seeking the good of all men, as the snatching of a brother first from destruction would be, if we saw him perishing with a company of strangers.

Does any one say, "This is true in the abstract, but the achievement is beyond our power;" we reply, It is; but not beyond your faith. We demand a reference, chapter and verse, to the passage where the Lord has decreed that Ireland shall re-

main in the grasp of the Papacy. You cannot produce it: then, where has he revoked the promise that "They that turn MANY to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever;" or the command, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord;" or the peculiar encouragement adapted to this time and to this work, revealed in the vision of John—"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." We are aware that a system has been introduced, the drift of which is to destroy the legitimate application of these passages in the Apocalypse to Papal Rome, and we are also aware of the immense advantage accruing to the cause of Antichrist through such interpretations; nevertheless, we quote the disputed passage, perfectly assured that the error of those who contravene its meaning, as understood by all Protestants for centuries past, will shortly be made manifest. We can, however, afford to dispense with it, seeing the whole purport of Scripture is with us, in a matter where the salvation of immortal souls is concerned; to say nothing of the obvious fact, that at this time Popery is making good her footing throughout every country where she can possibly find standing room, and acquiring so much power that, apart from the question of salvation or perdition to those under her yoke, it is, or will shortly be, a question of life or death to all who protest against her.

CHAPTER XII.

"TRUST in the Lord, and do good: so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." What good can the Christian possibly do, more acceptable to God than winning souls to Christ? "He that winneth souls is wise," and "they that be wise shall shine as the sun," when the kingdom of the Lord is established upon earth. The great desideratum is that of

personal effort in God's cause. Believers deny themselves, perhaps work with their hands, that they may have to give to that sacred and blessed treasury which provides Bibles, and Scripture Readers, and Schools, and Tracts, for their deluded fellow-countrymen. This is right; and any project that did not tend to increase rather than discourage such aid, would be a device of the devil, not a suggestion from above. We want all this; but we want the superaddition of that which every one in Ireland, and, alas! almost every one in England can now give—a *rica roce* plea for Christ with the followers of Antichrist. However small may be the company of believers in any locality, they are in the position of the island community hypothetically introduced a few pages back: their neighbours have been beguiled away from the truth of the gospel, notwithstanding that it remains the law of land, and that all powers, civil and ecclesiastical, are sworn to maintain it. The system that perverts the people is a foreign intrusion: its heads and directors are altogether alien; and though former generations of the race around us were brought under its yoke, such bondage is not hereditary; every one of its living victims was personally perverted: the more pitifully, too, as the perversion began in infancy, when the poor creature was shut out from the beamings of that light which directs *our* path, and enclosed in the darkness of the Satanic net spread over its devoted head. Is not this a case to move our pity? Shall our acquaintance, our tradesmen, our poor neighbours, our domestic servants, and those employed in various ways on every side, perish in the snare, because we cannot so far "trust in the Lord" as to "do good," when the means are immediately before us? It is when the prayer of faith has prefaced the word of truth that the latter is made effectual: and oh, what an encouragement it is to reflect that every soul rescued becomes a means of enlightening others; and the one little pebble dropped into the brook causes circle after circle to expand, until from bank to bank the influence is visibly carried over the whole surface. The Christian lady who pleads before the Lord the cause of the poor Romanist employed in some menial

office for her, and then kindly, affectionately, but most distinctly, proclaims the all-sufficiency of Christ, and the ruinous character of the delusion that is palmed on her for Christianity, that lady is doing a work most acceptable to God; a work that angels contemplate with joy, and devils with dismay. It is done, we know, by very many; and so often in vain that hope languishes, and faith itself fails; but faith ought never to fail; patience ought always to have its perfect work; and when we have really asked any thing according to God's will, who willeth not the death of a sinner, we know that we have what we require, if the weakness of our grasp let not the blessing go. "Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." "Behold the husbandmen waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain." Yet we scatter a little seed, and if on the morrow the harvest is not ready for the sickle, we conclude that God's word has returned unto Him void; and wanting perseverance to add "line upon line, line upon line; precept upon precept, precept upon precept; here a little and there a little," we fail of the blessing through the failure of our faith. It is marvellous to see how long and patiently a man will dance attendance on a palace, a public office, or an influential person's house, to procure even a trifling appointment for some one in whose temporal welfare he is interested; and how soon he tires of waiting on the King of Heaven for the gift of eternal life, an incorruptible inheritance, a crown of glory that fadeth not away, when the soul for which he pleads, if failing of this, must be cast into hell. It will not avail to excuse our heartlessness by appealing to God's unsearchable decrees; into them we cannot penetrate: our part is to obey His commands, and once more reiterate the impressive words, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

The era which we long to see is one of less talk and more work: less of self, and more of our neighbour. When Christians

meeting together, instead of retailing accounts of what others have done in the Lord's service, should each be able to relate some instance of his or her own personal attempt to bring the gospel home to the conscience of an erring neighbour. When familiar, letters should turn on the same point, and thus a holy emulation be stirred up throughout the community. So far from lessening the amount of support yielded to religious institutions, and contributed to zealous ministers, this would very greatly augment it; for not only would the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich abundantly rest on the cause of its advocates, but an experience of those obstacles that impede, and those successes that brighten the path of the pious labourers, would exceedingly quicken the sympathies already enlisted with them. There is, we know, an immense body of Protestants (in name) to whom such a plan must appear sheer madness; but these are not among the upholders of the good works already in progress; they are of the world, and consequently cannot be with us. Neither can we expect that every one who casts off the fetters of Popery would really put on the yoke of Christ, though many would, doubtless, be savingly converted at once, and all would be brought within reach of the gospel, and beyond the sound of the abominable falsities now palmed on them as the religion of Jesus Christ. We often hear the remark, "If the man be not changed in the heart, the changing of his creed will avail him nothing:" and this leads to great coldness in the work; seeing it frequently happens that a bad Romanist becomes a bad Protestant, and the disappointment disheartens those who hoped that his convictions were those of the heart, when the head only was convinced. Yet surely, we are very wrong to hesitate at snatching as many as we can from the dreadful system; because, though the individual may not at the time have fully received the truth, he is placed under the same advantages as we are, who have it freely taught; and his family, who are enabled also to partake in those means of grace, would otherwise be compelled to continue in the prison-house of Antichrist. A population delivered from the thralldom of the confes-

sional, the degrading idolatry of the mass-house, and the frightful tyranny that fills the heart with treason and the hands with blood, such a population would indeed change the aspect of the country beyond measure; and not only so, but the very expulsion of what the Lord hates, the rejection of a false worship, the overthrow of Baal's altars, hewing down his groves, and expelling his priests, as it would be the fruit of one blessing, so would it be the earnest of many more. Tares there will be, innumerable tares, among the wheat: but no Upas tree to overshadow the field and breathe a blight on all that grows in it. The Lord permits the tares, because neither man nor angel can accurately separate them from the good grain: but the Upas he does not bid us sanction. It is a foreign plant, a curse that none should tolerate; and heaven itself will rejoice when Ireland uproots and flings it beyond the boundaries of her isle.

Is Popery a tree? We appeal to the Word of God, and repeat, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamore-tree, be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you." Is Popery a mountain? We know it is a chief symbol used in Scripture to designate it; and again we quote—"Have faith in God: for verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea: and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Surely, surely, they who are too fearful, too self-abased to venture on speaking to their unhappy countrymen, may take this encouragement from the lips of Jesus, and pray, pray mightily, pray believingly, pray without ceasing, for the subversion of this great kingdom of Antichrist in a nation professing Christ. The promises to such prayer are large, full, and unequivocal. A great cloud of witnesses, not in the flesh, surrounds us, who have all experienced His faithfulness themselves, and wait to glorify Him anew for every manifestation

of it to us. Prayer proceeding from such faith as our Lord inculcates, and which He also will give when it is desired, must precede the effort to work; and it is because the people generally restrain prayer that God's servants meet with so little response to their appeals, and so little fruit to their labour. Even now, throughout the whole extent of the Papal influence, a mockery of united supplication is going on for the speedy apostacy of England. Let the Christians of England look to it that they pray down the increasing power of Popery, or they will find that though the Lord will not answer the prayer as such, He may speedily send the judgment on which their enemies calculate, and which by this pretence of united supplication, they would characterize as a great mercy vouchsafed to their intercession and thereby rivet the chains of darkness on the souls they entrap. It is in an awful conspiracy against England's faith, that the powers of hell are now combined; but many a poor Romanist in the simplicity of a deceived heart believing that he is asking a rich blessing on his Protestant brethren when he prays for the extinguishing of the light they now enjoy, will be answered by having the bandage removed from his eyes, and being enabled to rejoice in the brightness of that beam which he now ignorantly desires may be quenched to others. It is a great stimulus to us to labour for the real good of those who are praying for us. The originators of such prayer, very well knowing that it is not to God they must look for the success of their schemes, are digging a pit into which they will themselves fall, while many a victim now held in their net escapes.

All combines to speak encouragement: the re-appearance of that diabolical fraternity, the Jesuits, is indeed a visitation from God; at the same time it, in a manner, pledges Him who from of old "wrought for His name's sake, that it should not be polluted among the heathen," to arise and maintain the cause of His believing people and the honour of that holy and terrible name, which they dare to profane for their wicked purposes. The writer firmly believes that a time of great and wonderful revolution is at hand; and that the Lord

will put it into the hearts of His servants to make a strenuous effort for the deliverance of at least one country from the grasp of Rome; and be it remembered that as "wheresoever their carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together," so wheresoever the gospel standard is in a very marked manner elevated and unfurled, there ought the prayerful efforts of all His servants to be concentrated. No doubt, Jerusalem is the spot where the grand, final conflict will be fought; but among Gentile lands He will have some witnesses also; and surely the British isles shall not be forsaken! Scotland, whose stalwart arm of flesh, nerved by faith, thrust Popery beyond the border, and whose national church was actually the first among Christian churches to take up the cause of Israel, and to send forth spies into the goodly land with a purpose of smoothing a way for Israel's return; England, who in her good ship *TARSHISH** conveyed the first-fruits of the in-coming harvest to the Holy Land and spreads the wing of her great national power over the rising church of God in Jerusalem; Ireland, herself almost matching the afflictions of Israel through many centuries of sin and sorrow, ground down by the iron hand of Rome, doing the bidding and receiving the wages of Satan's vicar on earth, yet amid all never permitted to bear the brand of Israel's persecutors—in all these we see hope, strong hope, for stability in the day of fierce peril. Yet as Ireland is captive still, we are doubly, trebly bound to unloose her heavy burden, to break her yoke, and to let the oppressed go free.

We are not justified in taking it for granted that the Lord will not now show mercy on her perishing millions, because they have so long been forgotten: not conclude that He will not interpose to rescue them, because they are so many. Both those circumstances are calculated to lead to an opposite conclusion; for "the Lord will not cast off for ever; but though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion, according to the multitude of His mercies;" and the greater the number of

* The word *DEVASTATION*, the name of the ship in which the Hebrew Bishop went out, is a translation of "*Tarshish*."

<p>those who need His help, the stronger their chains, and the more powerful their oppressors, so much the greater is their claim on HIM who is strong to save, and no less willing than strong. He hath promised to answer when we call; He has promised to help when we work for His</p>	<p>glory, what lack we then to urge us on? Nothing: ALL-CONQUERING FAITH THE PROMISE SEES, AND LOOKS TO GOD ALONE; LAUGHS AT IMPOSSIBILITIES, AND SAYS, IT SHALL BE DONE!</p>
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